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NICARAGUA:

PEOPLE, SCENERY, MONUMENTS,

AND THE PROPOSED

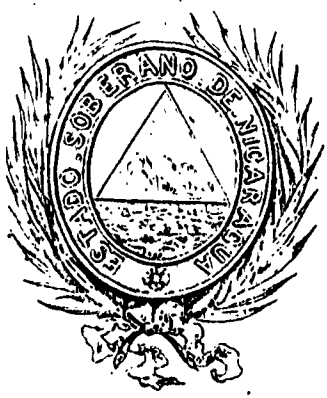
INTEROCEANIC CANAL

WITH

NUMEROUS ORIGINAL MAPS AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

BY E. G. SQUIER.

LATE CHARGE D' AFFAIRES OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE REPUBLICS OF CENTRAL AMERICA



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"HIC LOCUS EST GEMINI JANUA VASTA MARIS "—OVID.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

NEW YORK:
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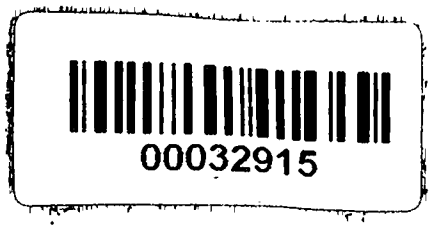

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THE dry season had now fairly commenced; for two weeks no rain had fallen on the plains of Leon, except an occasional "aguacéro" which sprinkled out its brief existence under the lee of the volcanoes. The circumstances

were now favorable for carrying out my long cherished purpose of again visiting Granada, and from thence prosecuting my investigations of the antiquities reported to exist in its vicinity, and in the islands of Lake Nicaragua. Locking up the main wing of my house, and handing over my keys to Padre Cartine for safe keeping, with no other companions than M. and my servant, I set out on the expedition.

It was just daybreak when we rode through the suburb of Guadaloupe, but already the Indians were yoking their oxen and preparing for their day's work. Here we overtook Don Felipe Jauregui, Commissioner of Honduras, who had started for Costa Rica, and who felicitated himself greatly on having our company during part of his journey. But Don Felipe had a servant with the mules and a led horse for emergencies, and valued time at its current rate in Central America, where it never rules at a premium. He had a long journey before him, and meant to take it easily. So, before we had gone a league, after trying in vain to seduce his horse into a pace, I took advantage of a little bend in the road to give him the slip, nor did I see anything more of him until the next day, in the evening, when he overtook us at the town of Masaya.

I never wearied of the ride to Pueblo Nuevo, and thence along the shores of Managua to Matearas; nor would the reader weary of its repeated description, could my pen truly portray its charms. The afternoon was still, and the beach, upon which the tiny waves toyed with a low, musical murmur, was cool in the broad shadows of the cliffs which bordered it upon the west, and crowned with verdure, shut off the rays of the evening sun. My old friends, the long-legged cranes, were there, distant and grave as usual, and clearly in bad humor at these repeated intrusions. And when we dismounted and took a bath in the lake, they audibly expressed their dissatisfaction, and marched off a few rods, where they held an indignation meeting, in company

with a rabble of water-hens and disreputable "zopolotes." I had great contempt for them ever after that.

We reached Matearas at sunset, and "put up" at the house of Don Henrique's pet. She inquired about our friend, and felt "very desolate," she said, because he had not sent her some pills he had promised—for be it known, every foreigner in Central America is more or less a "medico." The little naked fellow for whom Don Henrique had stood sponsor, was tumbling about the floor, engaged in a pretty even contest with two pigs and three chickens, about a piece of tortilla. The pigs appeared most afflicted, and squealed in a distressful way because of their ill success. Our little hostess did not take the trouble to interfere, but gave "aid and comfort" to her boy, by keeping off a matronly porker, evidently deeply interested, which stood looking in at the door-way. I could not help laughing at the group, but my merriment puzzled the poor woman exceedingly. She looked at me inquiringly, blushed, and drew forward a large reboso, which was thrown loosely over her shoulders, so as to conceal her figure. I saw her mistake at once, and hastened to correct it in the most direct manner, for in these countries it is the only way of preserving a good understanding. A tear glistened in her eye, while a smile lit up her face, as she replied in a touching tone, "A thousand thanks, Señor; we are very poor people, and cannot afford to be laughed at." She told me with the greatest frankness how soon another god-father would be wanted, and as she had had a Frenchman for the first, she should "so like" to have an American for the second. I assured her that I should be happy to serve, if I could make it convenient to be there at the proper time. A few minutes afterwards, I overheard her telling the gossiping female neighbors who had "dropped in," that the thing was all settled. "El Ministro del Norte" was to be sponsor for the prospective immortal, "seguro! seguro!" sure! sure! How proudly the little woman moved about the rest of the

evening! She superintended all the details of supper, and *when I went to bed on the table*, would have substituted her pillow, the only one in the house, for my saddle, had I permitted her. That table! There is but one thing harder under the sun, and that is Don Pedro Blanco's bed of hide!

After this intimation, I need not add that I was not exactly "lapped in Elysium" during the night. It was not so much the fault of the table, as of some arrieros, stopping at the hut over the way, who had got together the belles of the village, and with the aid of aguardiente, a guitar, and two tallow candles, were making a night of it. I sat up several times to look at them through the little square window over the table. Various groups of dancers were whirling around a man playing the guitar, a gay mestizo with a red sash around his waist and his hat set jauntily on one side, who performed with all the vigor of "the bones," in the *Opéras Ethiopiennes*, and from the shouts of laughter which followed some of the hits, evidently improvising the song with which he accompanied the music. Some of these hits, I infer, were personal, for suddenly a strapping yellow girl, in a dashing flounce, flung herself out of her partner's arms, and seizing the performer's hat, flung it under her feet. The next instant she had him by the hair;—there was a tustle, a mingled sound of laughter, supplication, and abuse, in the midst of which the table was upset, and the lights extinguished. I flattered myself this was the final "grand tableau." Delusive hope! Half an hour of violent discussion ensued, in which the voice of the Amazon was highest, and then the *entente cordiale* seemed restored. Looking out of the window, I saw the man of the guitar in his former place, and everything going on as before. I presume, however, that the *improvisor* was now more respectful in his allusions.

We left before sunrise the next morning, deferring breakfast until our arrival at Managua, twenty miles distant. I rode ahead, and allowed my horse to take his own course.

Upon reaching the volcanic ridge which I have mentioned as projecting into the lake, where the mule road diverges from the round-about *caminoreal*, he entered the wrong path, and we went on for half an hour before discovering the error. I then determined to push ahead, whatsoever the consequences. We soon came to a clearing, and a little beyond, to a number of huts, standing upon the very brow of the mountain, and looking out upon the lake, and beyond its shores, to the hills of Chontales. I involuntarily spurred my horse forward. It was the broadest, most luxuriant view upon which my eye had ever rested. That from Laurel Hill, descending the Alleghanies, is alone comparable to it, but lacks the grand and essential elements of lakes, volcanoes, and tropical verdure. The morning breeze swept fresh and exhilarating past us, and our very horses lifted their heads, and with expanded nostrils and ears thrown forward, seemed to drink in the cool air, and to enjoy the surprise and the scene not less than ourselves.

We were several times saluted with "buenas mañanas caballeros!" by a short, merry-faced old lady, the mistress of the huts, before we had the gallantry to turn from the scene to the señora. Two or three naked boys, with bows and arrows and cerbatanas or blowing-tubes, stood beside her, and a couple of grown girls peeped slyly at us from behind the broken door of the principal hut. The old lady was a sympathetic body, and her face was really brilliant with animation, as she exclaimed "buena vista, cabelleros!" prolonging the "vees-ta," as she swept her hand in the direction of the distant horizon. This "hatto," she said, was called "Santa Maria de Buena Vista," and she was the mistress. These, she added, are my niños, boys, and these "malditas," pointing to the girls who dodged out of sight, are my "*hijas grandes*," my big girls. "Venga!" come here, she ejaculated; but the girls wouldn't come, whereupon the old lady went into the house and dragged them out. One was fair, with

light hair and blue eyes, while the other, like her mother, was a brunette, her dark eyes, half shadowed by her long curling hair, fairly dancing with suppressed mischief. I had long before ceased to be surprised at wide differences of color and features in the same family; but the contrast here was so striking that I could not help exclaiming interrogatively "*ambas?*" *both?* "Si!" she answered, with emphasis; "esta negrita," this darkey, is my husband's, "y esta blanquita es una Francescita!" and this white one is French! The inference from this *naive* confession was so obvious a reflection on the old lady's honor, that I thought it but decent not to understand it, and modestly suggested, "Ah si, su compadre fue Frances," ah yes, her god-father was French! "No, su padre—padre!" no, her father, father, interrupted the matron, with energy; "I was young once," she added, after a pause, and with a toss of the head, which made me repent my ill-timed suggestion. Ah! the perfidious Frenchman who had abused the hospitalities of "Santa Maria de Buena Vista!" The wretch had evidently a taste for the picturesque.

The old lady inquired how I liked the place; I was, of course, delighted. "Very well," said she, buy it;" and she went on to enumerate its advantages, making the most of the view. I suggested that there was no water; but that she said was of slight importance, it was only a mile to the lake —she had got water there for fourteen years, and there was plenty of it, as we could see. Besides, I could have either one of her girls to bring it for me; *both* if I liked; and all for a hundred dollars! But the concluding argument confounded me; she communicated it in a whisper. The Norte Americanos were building a canal, and in a few months, Buena Vista would be worth four times the money! I took off my hat incontinently, and only regretted that the old lady had no lithographic press, wherewith to convert Buena Vista into town lots! I promised to consider the proposition —particularly so far as it related to the "negrita," and the

"blanquita," both of whom, I wished to have it distinctly understood, were to be included, because it was more than one ought to do, to bring *all* the water from the lake. The old lady admitted the force of the argument, and gravely assented. The final arrangement was deferred until my return. One of the boys pointed out the path, down the face of the mountain to the lake; we had only to follow the shore, he said, to reach Managua. I asked how far it was,—"hay no mas!" "there is no more, it is only a step," he replied, and we left him in high spirits, thinking we had really discovered a short cut, instead of having gone two leagues out of our way. The path to the edge of the lake was steep, but well-worn, and we descended without much difficulty. The beach was broad and smooth, and on a little knoll, covered with grass, and arched with trees, was the place where the women of Buena Vista did their washing. The huts, as we looked up, seemed perched on the edge of a precipice, and with the palms that surrounded them, stood out in sharp relief against the sky. Cattle from the pasturage grounds were loitering in the edge of the water; there was a donkey, grave but stubborn, which a half-grown boy was trying to drive somewhere, but which not only wouldn't go, but kicked viciously when the muchacho approached. The boy seemed almost ready to cry with vexation, and begged I would shoot the obstinate brute, which he denounced, not only as "sin verguenza," but as a great many other things, which would hardly bear translating. We left him stoning the "burro," at point blank distance, just out of the range of his heels; and if neither one has given in, they may be there still.

The shore was hard and smooth, and our horses moved along, the waves dashing to their fetlocks, with an elastic and nervous action, in which the merest clod must have sympathized. Occasionally arching their necks, and lifting up their heads, their whinny was like the blast of a trumpet! Ah, my noble gray—with thy clear eye, expanded nostrils,

taper ears, and the veins swelling full on thy arching neck!—son of Arabian sires! hast thou forgotten that morning's ride on the shores of Managua? Wine may quicken the blood with an unnatural, evanescent flow; the magic hakshish stupify the frame, and for the moment make the tense nerves vibrate to the melodies of the spirit world,—but give me a free rein, and the willing back of my Arab gray, and the full, expanding, elevating intoxication of a tropical morning!

On, on, we seemed to float along the edge of the lake. By-and-by the hills came down like barriers to the water. Here we scrambled for awhile amongst rough rocks, cutting vines and branches right and left with our swords, and emerged on the shore of a little bay. Two men, up to their arm-pits in the water, were throwing a cast-net near the rocks, while a third trailed after him what appeared to be a long branch of the palm tree, but which was a cord, whereon the fishes were strung. He towed it ashore, at our request, and showed us some hundreds of beautiful fish, most of them of a species resembling our rock-bass, and about the size of a small shad.. I asked the price—ten for a *medio*, or sixpence! We declined purchasing, whereupon he offered ten for a *quartillo*, equal to three cents. I then told him we did not wish to buy, but that there was a *real* to drink the health of los Americanos.

We had now come more than a league, and I began to think as it had been "*hay no mas*" to Managua at Buena Vista, we must be near the place. We were now told "*esta aqui*," "it is here, you are in it;" which we afterwards found to mean that it was only six miles further. After much experience, I came to understand that "*hay no mas*," "there is no more," or it is no further, is a figurative way of saying from nine to twelve miles; and "*esta aqui*," "it is here," from six to nine. "Una legua," a league, I may add, for the benefit of uninitiated travellers, may be calculated at plea-

sure, at from a mile and a half, to five miles,—"you pays your money, and you takes your choice!"

Another league along the lake shore, occasionally turning a rocky headland, and we came to a large plantain walk, from which a broad path diverging to the right, assured us that we were approaching the city. The path was as smooth and as clear as a race course, and our horses, who had been in high spirits all the morning, struck at once into a fast gallop. I bent down on my steed's neck, to avoid the branches of the trees, and gave him a loose rein. It was a very undignified race, no doubt, on the part of the riders, but both gray and bay enjoyed it, and so did we, by sheer force of sympathy. We met numbers of people going to their *huertas*, who leaped out of the path as we went scurrying along. Some cried "*hoo-pah!*" and others ejaculated something, in which I could only distinguish "*borracho*"—"*drunk!*" But *that* was a mistake.

We dashed into the plaza of Managua, with steaming steeds, and rode to the posada. It was not nine o'clock, yet we had ridden twenty-six miles. We ordered breakfast, and it was quite ready before Ben came trotting up on his mule. He was in bad humor, and I couldn't blame him, for it was shabby to leave him alone in the chapparal.

At eleven, when we started for Masaya, the sky was clouded but it did not rain, and we rode at a rapid pace over the intervening thirty-six miles. Again we paused on the "mal pais" of the volcano, and looked down upon its broad, desolate fields—doubly black and desolate under a lowering sky. Again we lingered in the noiseless streets of sweet, embowered Nindiri, born of the lake and mountain,—and at four o'clock entered the suburbs of Masaya.

I had a letter to a gentleman, who, for reasons which will duly appear, shall be nameless, and inquired for his residence. In reaching it, we had to go through the plaza; it afforded a striking contrast to the appearance it had worn

when we passed it before. The closed shops were now open, and flaunting with gayly-colored goods—groups of people with laden mules were scattered in every direction, and women with dulces stepped across it with the precision of grenadiers! A procession consisting of a boy ringing a little bell, and followed by some musicians and a priest, was just emerging from the great church, on its way to administer the last rites of religion to the dying. The hum of voices was stilled on the instant; every head was uncovered and every knee bent, as the little procession moved by on its mission of consolation and mercy; another moment, and the current of life and action flowed on as if nothing had occurred.

The house where we were to stop was a very good one, and we rode at once into the court-yard. A lady, fat and fair, and not without pretensions to beauty, was seated in the corridor. She invited us to dismount, which we did, and I handed her my letter of introduction. She looked at the direction, and said it was for her husband, who had gone out; she would give it to him on his return. I suggested that she had better read it; but, singular woman, "she never read her husband's letters!" She nevertheless showed a distant relationship to the sex, by depositing it in her bosom—the bosom of her dress. Perhaps she had the ability, in common with certain maiden ladies of New-England, of taking in the contents by a mystical process of magnetic absorption. It wasn't pleasant to sit waiting in the corridor; we had not come to make a call, but to stop for the night, and all the next day, and after waiting a reasonable time for an invitation, I told Ben to unsaddle the horses, and place our baggage in the corridor. The mistress looked a little puzzled, but said nothing. In fact the whole affair was getting to be awkward; so I suggested to M., that pending the return of our proposed host, we should visit the lake.

The first man we met in the street proved to be one of the

identical alcaldes who were in such a fever to ring the bells, when we had passed through, six months before. He at once volunteered to accompany us to the lake, and took the lead with a magisterial air, as if heralding royalty, bringing his golden-headed cane down at every step with an emphasis which struck terror into all the muchachos within a square of him. Occasionally he would stop to point out to us, or to explain, some object of interest. *That* house, he said, the door and windows of which were riddled with bullets, had been the rendezvous of the "facciosos" during the late disturbances. The prefect having got wind of their meetings, silently surrounded it with soldiers, and the first intimation the conspirators had of danger, came with a hundred bullets through their doors and windows, and was followed by a charge of the bayonet—a mode of proceeding I thought sufficiently decided for any latitude! That house, falling into ruins, and surrounded by rank weeds, that was the house of a man who had murdered a padre; the bishop had cursed the spot, and it was fenced in with posts, so that stray porkers might not fall under ban by entering its crumbling portal! Those extraordinary clumps of flowers, looking like mammoth golden epaulettes, were flowers of the coyol palm—and those brown shells, each half shaped like a canoe, and almost as large, those were the cases in which the flower had matured. And thus our guide went on, marching us the while down a broad avenue, thronged with water carriers, in the direction of the lake. I observed that the jars here were not carried on the head, but in a kind of net-work sack, suspended on the back by a broad and gayly woven strap passing around the foreheads of the bearers, who came up panting and covered with perspiration.

Half or three-quarters of a mile from the plaza, we came to the edge of the immense sunken area, at the bottom of which is the lake. Like the "Laguna de Salinas," near Granada, and which I have already described, it is sur-

rounded by precipitous cliffs, except upon the side of the volcano, opposite the city, where the lava has flowed over, and made a gradual but rough and impassable slope to the water. The first stage of the descent is by a broad flight of steps, sunk in the solid rock, terminating in an area, fenced by a kind of balustrade, or parapet, of the same material. I looked over this, and below was a sheer precipice, from which I recoiled with a shudder. Here stands a little cross firmly fixed in the rock. The path now turns to the right, winding along the face of the declivity, here cut in the cliff, there built up with masonry, and beyond secured by timbers, fastened to the trees, many of which are of gigantic size, covered with vines, and twining their gnarled roots in every direction among the rocks. These rocks themselves are burned and blistered with heat, with vitrified surfaces of red or black, resembling the hardest enamel. Were it not for the verdure, which hides the awful steeps and yawning depths, the path would prove a fearful road for people of weak heads and treacherous nerves, whose confidence in themselves would not be improved by the crosses which, fastened among the stones, or against the trees, point out the places of fatal catastrophes. Our guide advised us to take off our boots before commencing the descent, and the women whom we met slowly toiling up, in many places holding on by their hands, panted "*quita sus botas!*"—"take off your boots!" But we were more used to boots than they, and kept them on—not without subjecting ourselves to a suspicion of fool-hardiness. Down, catching glimpses of the lake, apparently directly beneath us, and as distant as when we started,—down, down,—it was full fifteen or twenty minutes before we reached the bottom. Here were numerous places among the fallen rocks and the volcanic debris of the cliff, where the *aguadoras* filled their jars. Many of these were bathing in the water, carrying their jars out several rods from shore, filling them there and then towing

them in. They did not appear at all disconcerted by our presence, so we sat down on the rocks and talked with the brown Naiads. I asked one of them if the lake was deep? She replied that it was "insondable," bottomless; and to give me practical evidence of its great depth, paddled ashore, and taking a large stone in each hand, went out not more than thirty feet, and suffered herself to sink. She was gone so long that I began to grow nervous, lest some accident had befallen her in those unknown depths, but directly she popped up to the surface, almost in the very place where she had disappeared. She gasped a moment for breath, and then, turning to me, exclaimed, "you see!"

The water is warm, but limpid, and, it is said, pure. When cooled, it is sweet and palatable. Considering that the lake is clearly of volcanic origin, with no outlet, and in close proximity to the volcano of the same name, this is a little remarkable. Most lakes of this character are more or less impregnated with saline materials.

The view of the lake, and the volcano rising on the opposite shore, from the place where we were seated, was singularly novel and beautiful. Above us towered a gigantic ceiba, festooned with vines, amongst which a company of monkeys were scrambling, chattering, and grimacing. Occasionally one would slip down the long, rope-like tendrils of the vines, scold vigorously for a moment, and then, as if suddenly alarmed, scramble up again amongst the branches. The girls said they were specially indignant at us because we were "blancos," and we had afterwards the most conclusive, if not the most savory, evidence of their dislike, which it would be indelicate to explain. Suffice it to say, we registered a vow to return the next day with our guns, and teach the ill-bred mimics better manners.

The cliffs which wall in the lake resemble the Palisades on the Hudson river, but are much higher, and destitute of the corresponding masses of debris at the base. The early

Spanish chroniclers speak of them as a "thousand fathoms" high; later travellers have changed the fathoms to yards, but even that is probably an exaggeration. We had no means of determining the question, and wouldn't have gone down again, after once regaining the upper earth, to have solved it a thousand times. The descent was mere *bagatelle*, but the ascent one of those things which answer for a life-time, and leave no desire for repetition. We reached the upper cross after a most wearisome scramble, only fit for monkeys to undertake, and sat down on the last flight of stone steps, wholly exhausted, covered with perspiration, and our temples throbbing from the exertion, as if they would burst. The *aguadoras*, accustomed to it from infancy, seemed to suffer almost as much as ourselves, and as they passed the cross, made its sign in the usual manner, in acknowledgment of their safe return.

All the water for domestic purposes is thus painfully brought up from the lake. During the "*invierno*" the rain is collected in tanks, or ponds, in the courts of the principal houses, for the use of the horses and cattle; but when this supply becomes exhausted, as it does towards the close of the dry season, the water for their use has also to be obtained here. An attempt had been made to cut a path for mules down the face of the cliff, but it had failed. About two leagues from Masaya, however, the people had met with better success, and there is now a place where animals, with some difficulty, can reach the lake. There are a number of towns, besides Masaya, which obtain their water from the same source. These towns existed, and the same practice prevailed, before the Conquest, when the country was tenfold more populous than now. Water-carrying seems to have always been one of the principal institutions of this section of country, and as there are no streams, and never will be, it is likely to remain about the only enduring one, or until some enterprising Yankee shall introduce a grand

forcing pump, worked, perhaps, by volcanic power—for, having made the lightning a "common carrier," I do not see why volcanoes shouldn't be made to earn their living!

Oviedo has described this lake as it was in 1529, and it will be seen that it has little changed since then. His estimate of the height of the cliffs surrounding it, about one thousand feet, is probably not far from the truth.

"Another very remarkable lake is found in this province, although it cannot be compared, in extent, with *Cocibolca* (Nicaragua). The water is much better. It is called the lake of *Lendiri* (Nindiri or Masaya), and the principal cazique, who lives on its banks, bears the same name. This lake is about three leagues from Granada, but they are so long that we may safely call them four. I arrived there on St. James' day, July 25, 1529, and stopped with Diego Machuca, the same gentleman of whom I have spoken heretofore. I was well received and hospitably entertained, and I went with him to visit this lake, which is a very extraordinary one. To reach it, we had to take a road, the descent of which is so rapid that it should be called rather a stairway than a road. Adjoining it we saw a round, high mountain, on the summit of which is a great cavity, from which issues a flame as brilliant but stronger and more continuous than that of Etna, or Mount Gibel, in Sicily. It is called the Volcano of Masaya. Towards the south an arid and open slope extends to the shores of the lake; but on the other sides, the lake is shut in by walls, which are very steep and difficult of descent. I beheld a path, as I was led along, the steepest and most dangerous that can be imagined; for it is necessary to descend from rock to rock, which appear to be of massive iron, and in some places absolutely perpendicular, where ladders of six or seven steps have to be placed, which is not the least dangerous part of the journey. The entire descent is covered with trees, and is more than one hundred and thirty fathoms before reaching the lake, which is very beautiful, and may be a league and a half both in length and breadth. Machuca, and his cazique, who is the most powerful one in the country, told me that there were, around the lake, more than twenty descents worse than this by which we had passed, and that the inhabitants of the villages around, numbering more that one hundred thousand Indians, came here for water. I must confess that, in making the descent, I repented more than once of my enterprise, but persisted, chiefly from shame of avowing my fears, and partly from the encouragement of my companions, and

from beholding Indians loaded with an aroba and a half of water, (nearly 40 lbs.,) who ascended as tranquilly as though travelling on a plain. On reaching the bottom, I plunged my hand into the water, and found it so warm that nothing but intense thirst could have induced me to drink it. But when it is carried away, it soon cools, and becomes the best water in the world to drink. It seems to me that this lake must be on a level with the fire that burns in the crater of Masaya, the name of which, in the Chorotegan language, signifies the burning mountain. But one species of fish, as small as a needle, is found here; they are cooked in omelets. The Indians esteem the water very good and healthful, and when they go down, are sure to bathe in it. I asked the cazique why they did not bring fish from other places and put in it? He replied that they had done so several times, but the water rejected them, and they died, diffusing a fetid odor, and corrupting the water. Among the descents, there was one formed of a single ladder of ropes from top to bottom. As there is no water for several leagues around, and the country is fertile, they put up with the inconvenience, and obtain their supply from this lake."

The little fishes found here are the same with those called *sardines* at Managua, and which I have described in another place.

It was dusk when we returned to the plaza, which was now filled with people, presenting the most animated appearance that it is possible to conceive. It was market evening, and every one who had aught to buy or to sell, was on the ground, exhibiting his wares, or in search of what he wanted. I have said that Masaya is distinguished for its manufactures, and we now had the opportunity of learning their variety and extent. Upon one side of the plaza stood mules loaded with grass or sacate, wood carefully split and bound up in bundles like faggots, maize, and the more bulky articles of consumption. Near by were carts overflowing with oranges, melons, aguacates, jocotes, onions, yucas, papayas, and the thousand blushing, luscious fruits and vegetables of the country, going at prices which we regarded as absolutely ruinous, while las vendedoras chanted:

"Tengo narangas, papayas, jocotes,
Melones de agua, de oro, zapotes,
Quieren á comprar?"

"I have oranges, papayas, jocotes,
Melons of water, of gold,[1] and zapotes,
Will you buy?"

Here were women seated on little stools beside snow-white sheets, or in the centre of a *cordon* of baskets, heaped with cacao or coffee, starch, sugar, and the more valuable articles of common use; here a group with piles of hats of various patterns, hammocks, cotton yarn, thread of pita, native blankets, petates, and the other various articles which Yankees call "dry goods;" here another group, with water jars, plates, and candlesticks of native pottery; there a *sillero* or saddler exposed the products of his art, the *zapatero* cried his shoes, the *herrero* his machetes, bits for horses, and other articles of iron; girls proclaimed their dulces, boys shouted parrots and monkeys, and in the midst of all a tall fellow stalked about bearing a wooden-clock from Connecticut, in his arms, gaudily painted, with the picture of the sun on the dial, which seemed to tip us a familiar wink as I inquired the price. Unfortunate inquiry! "Quarenta pesos; barato, barato, muy barato!" "Forty dollars; cheap, cheap, very cheap!" And the wretch followed us everywhere with that abominable clock. "Sir," said I at last, "I make clocks, and will bring one here and sell it for five dollars, if you do not stop your noise!" Whereupon he marched off, still crying, "Un relox esplendidisimo, quiera á comprar!" Wherever we passed, we were stunned with the mercaders, who fairly hustled us, in their anxiety to thrust their various wares full in our faces. The hackmen at a steamboat landing could not be worse. Directly the alcalde, who had gone off to collect his official associates, rejoined us; and then, amidst

[1] Musk melons, or melones almizcleños.

the bustle of the market, we had ten minutes of laborious bowing and speechifying, much to the edification of the people, no doubt, who piled themselves up around us, full twenty deep. I had been enjoying myself mightily, but all was done for now, and leaving the busy scene of which I would gladly have seen more, I moved off to our quarters.

Our proposed host had returned, and received us almost civilly. He was a dark, saturnine looking man, and evidently not given to hospitality. We nevertheless got a very good supper, none the less acceptable because of our visit to the lake on the top of a horseback ride of sixty miles that day. We had not finished before Señor Jauregui trotted up to the door. He had heard where we were, and had come directly to our quarters. I thought he was better received than we had been, but the difference was not more than between cool and cold. I made a kind of apology for my desertion of the Señor, which was very politely received; but I hope it was mere satisfactory to him than it was to me.

During the evening I hired some mozos to go to the Indian Pueblos of Jinotepec and Nindiri, to bring me next morning the oldest Indians who could be found, retaining any knowledge of the language originally spoken here, with the view of procuring a brief vocabulary. The rest of the evening was spent in inquiring about antiquities, and in listening to the family history of the Señora of the mansion, who, besides keeping a *tienda* in one corner of the house, had the honor of being sister of a late minister of the country in Europe, once Secretary of the Treasury, but who just now did not stand in the highest favor with Government or people. How much the fact of this relationship had to do with my reception, it is hardly worth the while to conjecture. The family history was not the most entertaining to weary travellers, and having a keen remembrance of the table at Matearas, and catching glimpses of inviting curtained beds in the inner rooms, I made no efforts to disguise my *ennui*. Finally, I

plainly suggested that it was bed time. Our host took a miserable candle, but instead of leading to the inviting curtained beds aforesaid, marched us out into the corridor, to a kind of outbuilding at one extremity, with a rickety door, a single little window, unpaved floor, and mildewed walls. Here were two dirty hide beds, upon the headboards of which some chickens were roosting. There was not an article of furniture in the room; not a rag of clothing on the beds. He stuck the candle against the wall, and was about departing, when I called him by name. He turned round, and I looked him full in the face for a moment, and then told him "go!" He really had the decency to blush! Ben made up a kind of bed with the saddles and blankets, and spite of all discomforts I slept soundly and well. I was up early to enjoy the delicious air of the morning, and strolled out into the silent streets, and for half a mile up one of the avenues, to a small picturesque church in a little square, surrounded by a high cactus hedge, and filled with magnificent, ancient palms. The church was a quaint structure, and on a slab sunk in the wall of the façade was an inscription, of which I could only make out the words, "en el año 1684." It had been long abandoned, and a flock of silent zopilòtes were perched on the roof, with wings half expanded to catch the breeze of the morning. The area around it was now used as a cemetery, and kept scrupulously neat and free from weeds.

Upon my return to the house, I found the Commissioner and the breakfast waiting. We had the table all to ourselves in the corridor, and in the intervals of his masticatory exercises, Don Felipe favored me with his private opinion of our host, which coincided wonderfully with my own. He also produced a letter, in a very confidential way, which he begged I would forward to Leon, as it contained a full exposure of the treatment to which we had been subjected; but which, it afterwards turned out, related to certain political movements of doubtful propriety. And as he mounted his horse to

depart, he whispered in my ear, with the air of a man vindicating the national reputation for hospitality, that he had paid the bill for the party. I, of course, could only bow my acknowledgments, and with a "buena viaje," the Commissioner rode off. The next time I saw him, three or four months later, a file of soldiers was marching him through the streets of Leon, a proscribed man, under arrest for treason!

Up to the departure of the Commissioner, I had been in doubt as to my position in the house, whether I was a paying guest or otherwise, and had in consequence put up with many things little agreeable to my feelings. I now felt relieved, and made a number of very imperative if not necessary orders, by way of compensating myself for lost time, and getting the worth of my money. Ben caught the spirit, and instead of attending to our animals himself, went through double the fatigue in making the servants of the house do the drudgery, treating them at the same time to a variety of forcible epithets, besides indulging in some reflections on their maternal ancestry.

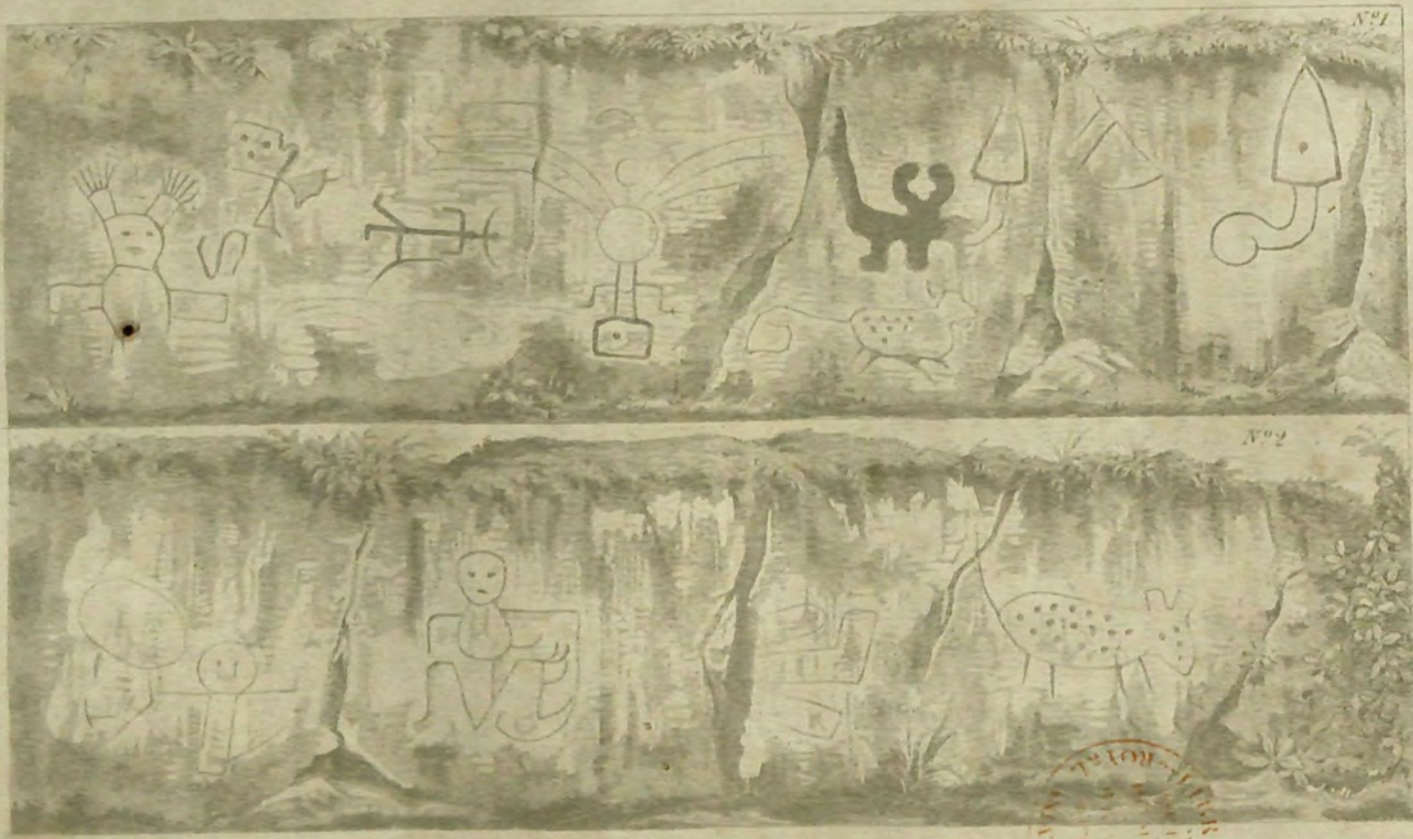
Before eight o'clock the Indians whom I had sent for made their appearance, and squatted down in the corridor. Amongst them was a female, a little withered creature, with only a blanket around her middle, who seemed to know more than all the rest, and who was as prompt as an ambitious school-boy in replying to my questions. This annoyed her husband greatly, who, not content with berating her for what he called her impertinence, would have administered practical reproof, had he not been kept in check by our presence. "Ah, señor," he said, "this woman has been so all her life! Heaven help me!" and he lifted his eyes and crossed himself. With great difficulty I filled out my blank vocabulary, and dismissed my swarthy visitors, giving an extra real or two to the woman, who gratefully volunteered to visit Leon, if I required further information.

I had heard of a ravine not far from Masaya, in which

there were inscribed rocks, "piedrads labradas," and my official guide of the preceding evening undertook to lead us to the place. We went down the same broad avenue towards the lake, but before reaching it, turned to the left, and passing through luxuriant fields of yucas and tobacco, along the edge of the precipice, came at last to a hollow, where stood the hydraulic wonder of Masaya, called, *par excellence*, "La Maquina," the machine. It was a very simple and very rude apparatus for elevating water from the lake. The water jars were placed in sacks attached to an endless rope, connected with a pulley below, and revolving on a wheel or drum, turned by horse power above. The cliff here was lower than at any other point, and for half the distance to the water absolutely precipitous. Below, the fallen rocks and the earth washed from the ravine had formed an inclined plane, up which the jars were brought on men's shoulders. The proprietor of the Maquina, who seemed exceedingly proud of his achievement, told me that the machine raised the jars as fast as eight active men could bring them to the foot of the precipice. The water was emptied into a large trough hollowed from a single tree, and here the proprietors of the town watered their animals, at a certain rate per week. The whole affair was an experiment, and he was not yet certain that it would succeed, because of the opposition of the aguadoras, who regarded it as a flagrant innovation on their immemorial privileges. He concluded by inquiring if we had similar contrivances in "El Norte" and seemed very complacent when I assured him that there was nothing of the kind in the whole extent of our country. The Maquina stood at the mouth of the ravine of which we were in search. We entered, and proceeded up its narrow bed, shut in by walls of rock, and completely arched over with trees, for about a quarter of a mile. Here the face of the rock upon the left side was comparatively smooth, and literally covered with figures rudely cut in outline A few were still dis-

tinct, but most were so much obliterated that they could not be made out with any degree of satisfaction. Many were covered with the fallen debris, and the earth which the rains had brought down; and still others were carved so high up on the precipitous rocks, that their character could not be ascertained. They covered the face of the cliffs for more than a hundred yards, and consisted chiefly of rude representations of animals and men, with some ornamented and perhaps arbitrary figures, the significance of which is now unknown. PLATE I. of the "*Sculptured Rocks of Masaya*," exhibits the principal outlines upon the first section to which we came, and PLATE II. those upon the second. Upon the latter there seems to have been an attempt at delineating the sun in two places, and perhaps also to record some event, for it is a plausible supposition that the straight marks on the upper section of Plate II. were intended for numerals. The principal right hand figure of this section seems to have been designed to represent a shield, arrows, or spears, and the *xiuhtlatl*, or aboriginal instrument for throwing spears, which are frequently grouped in similar manner in the Mexican paintings. The principal figure in the inferior section is evidently intended to represent a monkey. In respect to the other figures, the reader is at liberty to form his own conjectures. Rocks inscribed in very much the same manner, are scattered all over the continent, from the shores of New-England to Patagonia. Most, if not all of them, are the work of savage tribes, and seem generally designed to commemorate events of greater or less importance. They are however far too rude to be of much archæological value; and have little interest except as illustrating the first steps in a system of pictorial representation which it is supposed subsequently became refined into a hieroglyphical, and finally into an alphabetical system.

There is some reason for believing that this ravine was regarded as a sacred place; a hypothesis which derives a



SCULPTURED ROCKS OF MASAYA PLATE, I.

ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL SOCIETY

SCULPTURED ROCKS OF MASAYA PLATE, II.

LITH. OF SARONY & MAJOR, NEW-YORK.

certain degree of support from the seclusion and gloom of the spot, where the rays of the sun seldom reach, or reach but for a moment when the wind parts the verdure which

VIEW IN THE "QUEBRADA DE LAS INSCRIPCIONES."

shadows over it like a tent. Upon PLATE II., No. 2, will be observed a flight of rude steps cut in the rock, indicated by the letter *a*. These lead to a shelf in the cliff, about three paces broad, at the back of which the rock again abruptly rises to the height of more than a hundred feet. Upon this shelf, and immediately above the figure which I have supposed to represent an ape, is what is called "el Baño," the Bath. It is a rectangular excavation in the rock, nearly eight feet long, four

broad, and eighteen inches deep, cut with great smoothness, the sides sloping regularly to the bottom. A groove about an inch and a half deep, leading to the edge of the cliff, is cut entirely around this basin, with the probable design of preventing the water from running into it. The name given to this excavation throws no light upon its true character, for it would be wholly inadequate for bathing purposes, even if there were a supply of water near, which there is not. There seems to be but one explanation of its origin, which has so much as the merit of plausibility, viz., that it was, in some way, connected with the superstitions of the aborigines, and devoted to sacred objects.

To the left, and a little above the figure which I have supposed to represent the sun, (*c*,) there is a pentagonal hole or shaft, penetrating horizontally into the rock. It is about sixteen or eighteen inches in diameter, and of an indefinite depth. I thrust a pole into it for upwards of twenty feet. The sides are perfectly regular and smooth. Our guide pointed out to me one similar, some distance off, in another part of the ravine. It was, however, not more than five or six inches in diameter, and occurred so high up on the cliff that I could not ascertain its depth. The rock is basaltic or trachytic, and very hard. I am not aware that such openings are

found in this kind of rock; but nevertheless suppose that those under notice are natural. Our guide insisted that they were artificial, and said the Indians have a tradition that they lead to subterranean chambers. I cannot describe them better than by saying that they appeared to be the matrices from which gigantic crystals had been withdrawn.

Besides the figures represented in the plates, there were

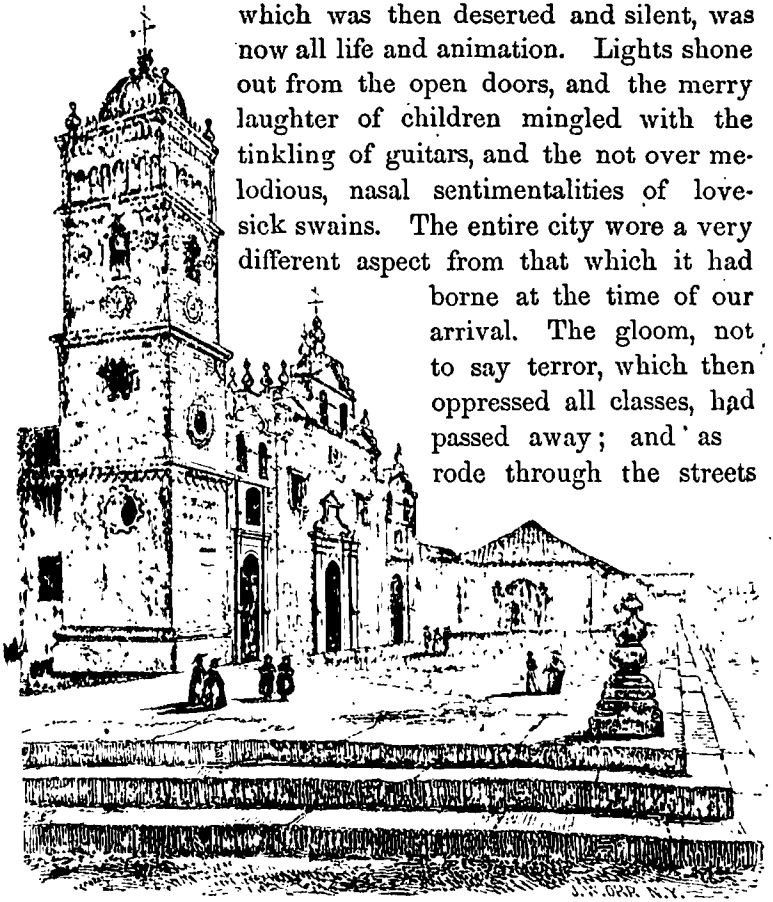
many isolated ones, at various places on the rocks, among which those engraved above were several times repeated. Our guide also told us that there were other rocks, having figures both painted and sculptured upon them, at several points around the lake, but we could not ascertain the precise locality of any except those before us. Near a place called Santa Catrina, I was informed, there is a large rock covered with figures in red paint, like those at Nihapa, representing men and women dancing, and playing upon instruments of music. I had, however, no opportunity of ascertaining how far the account coincided with the facts, but have no doubt that it was somewhat exaggerated. The man at the Maquina also told me about what he called "stone vases," which were to be found below the cliffs, at the edge of the lake, a league distant from where we now were. Upon questioning him as to their character, I ascertained that they were kettle-shaped excavations in rocks lying on the shore. He said they were now used to receive leather for tanning, and were probably originally devoted to a similar purpose.

It was late when we returned to Masaya, but as the moon was in its first quarter, I resolved to ride to Granada that evening. So we despatched a cup of chocolate (for which I paid the lady, with the distinguished connections, a dollar and a half) and mounted our horses just as the sun was sinking behind the volcano of Masaya. I hired a mozo in the plaza to ride ahead and put us in the right path,—a precaution, the necessity of which will appear when I say that foot and mule paths diverge in a thousand directions from every principal town, all so nearly alike that it is impossible for the stranger to tell one from another. We met hundreds of Indians, of both sexes, young and old, coming in from the fields, each bearing a small load of wood, corn, plantains, or other articles of consumption. They were all in excellent humor, and saluted us gayly. By-and-by the night fell, and except an occasional straggler, we had the

path to ourselves. Now we wound along in deep dells and ravines, where it was so dark that we could not see each other, and anon emerged into the narrow open savannahs, of which I have elsewhere spoken, smiling under the soft light of the crescent moon. The paths were so numerous, that, after puzzling myself into a state of profoundest confusion, in attempting to keep the broadest and most frequented, I left the selection entirely to my horse. Where we should bring up was a matter of uncertainty; our only land-mark was the volcano of Momobacho, and while that was kept to the right, I knew we could not be greatly out of our way. Our horses were fresh, the evening was cool, and forest and savannah, light and shade, seemed to float past us like the silent scenery of a dream. That ride was a poetical episode of existence, as perfect in its kind as the morning passage along the shores of Lake Managua, with which it contrasted so strongly. Here all was dim and calm and silent, deep shadows and mellow light; there the great sun ruled in his strength, the leaping waters, the music of wind and wave, the songs of birds, man and beast, all was life and action, and the human soul which swelled to the exuberant harmonies of the one, subsided to the holy cadences of the other. Happy is he who truly sympathizes with Nature, and whose heart beats responsively to her melodies. One hour of such communion with our great and genial Mother! How all the struggles of life, the petty aims and ambitions of men, dwindle before the comprehensive majesty of her teachings!

As we rode on, I tried in vain to recognize the features of the country, and the suspicion that we had missed our way passed into a certainty, when, emerging suddenly from a long reach of gloomy forest, we found ourselves upon the precipitous banks of the "Laguna de Salinas." The declining moon shone slantingly upon that deep Avernian lake, with its cliffs casting the shadow of their frown over more than half its surface. I paused for a moment to look upon the

gloomy picture, and then turned off into the circuitous camino real, which we had now reached, for Granada. A brisk ride of little more than half an hour brought us to the arsenal, which stands like a sentinel on the outmost limits of the city. It no longer bristled with armed men, as it had done when we passed it six months before; and the Jalteva, which was then deserted and silent, was now all life and animation. Lights shone out from the open doors, and the merry laughter of children mingled with the tinkling of guitars, and the not over melodious, nasal sentimentalities of love-sick swains. The entire city wore a very different aspect from that which it had borne at the time of our arrival. The gloom, not to say terror, which then oppressed all classes, had passed away; and as rode through the streets



CHURCH OF SAN FRANCISCO, GRANADA.

and witnessed the apparent absence of want, of care for the present, or concern for the future, I could not resist the im-

pression that probably no equal number of people in the world enjoyed more real happiness than these. With the mass of men, those whose higher powers of enjoyment have never been developed, and whose happiness depends chiefly upon the absence of physical wants, or upon the ease with which they may be gratified, the life of the people of Granada must come very near to their ideal of human existence. And he will be a bold speculator, who having seen man under the various aspects, political or otherwise, in which the world presents him, shall deny the truth of the popular idea; and a bold innovator who, in vain aspirations for what he conceives necessary for the popular welfare, shall disturb this illusion, if illusion it be, which the mass of mankind so fondly cherish.

I had engaged quarters in advance, and rode to them at once. A large sala was ready for our reception, and in less than ten minutes a cup of foaming chocolate was smoking upon the sideboard. Our first visitor was our old friend, Dr. S., who brought with him another American, a bluff sailor from Albany, who, by a singular series of vicissitudes, had found his way to Granada. He had shipped from New York for Rio, thence to Callao, where the crew was paid off, and the vessel sold. The world was all agog for California, and Jack, with his brother tars, also caught the fever. But how to get there was a question. Every vessel was overcrowded, and passages were at a rate far beyond the ability of any of them to pay. In this dilemma eight of their number clubbed together and purchased an open whale-boat, which they victualled and watered to the best of their ability, and, with a daring eminently American, started on a voyage of upwards of four thousand miles. They put in once or twice to procure supplies, and had accomplished one-half of the distance, when they were overtaken by a storm, dismasted, and capsized, and with the loss of two of their number, after drifting for four days, with neither food nor drink,

at the mercy of the winds and currents, were finally driven upon an unknown coast. Here a few wild fruits, some birds, and shell-fish, supplied the immediate wants of nature. Repairing their disabled boat, so far as they were able, without clothing, arms, or utensils of any sort, they coasted painfully along the shore for two days. On the third day they found a few Indians diving for pearls, who, alarmed at their appearance, fled into the forest. One was overtaken, and through the medium of some Spanish, little understood upon one side and still less upon the other, they ascertained that they were in the Bay of Culebra, in the department of Guanacaste, the southern district of Nicaragua. The region along the coast was uninhabited, but after much difficulty they succeeded in reaching the little village of Santa Cruz, in the interior. Here a division of property, consisting of two old silver watches, and twelve dollars in cash, took place, and the party separated, each with four dollars wherewith to clothe himself, and commence the world again. Jack, who was something of a carpenter, tried to mend his fortunes by mending the houses of the people, but soon found that houses good or bad were of little consequence, and so hired himself to a vaquero who was about starting with a drove of mules for the city of Nicaragua. The fare was bad, and the labor incredible, and after three weeks of suffering in the hot sun by day, and in pestilent damps at night, his feet lacerated by sharp stones, his body torn by thorns and inflamed from the bites of insects, with a raging fever which made him delirious for hours together, and caused his hair to drop in handfuls from his head,—in this plight, poor Jack reached Nicaragua. And here, to crown his miseries, his rascally employer not only refused to pay him, but, while he was lying delirious in an outhouse, robbed him of his little store of money. When the fit had passed, he staggered out into the streets and towards the fields, muttering incoherently. The children were frightened by his haggard looks and bloodshot eyes, and fled

as he reeled along. Fortunately, he was seen by one of the citizens, who not only brought him to his own house, but sent at once for Dr. S., then accidentally in the city, who attended the poor fellow with characteristic humanity and unwearied assiduity, day and night, until he had recovered, and then took him to his own house in Granada. He was still weak, but fast regaining his strength, and I listened to his story, told with the bluff heartiness of the sailor, with an interest which the art of the novelist could not heighten. I had the satisfaction, a couple of months later, of securing his passage on board a French vessel bound to that land of promise to which he still looked forward with unwavering hope; and since my return to the United States, I have received a letter from him, modestly announcing that he has amassed six thousand dollars,—the sum which "he was bound to win or die," and as one-third owner and mate of a little brig, was on the eve of starting for the Sandwich Islands on a trading venture!

Such, in this new land, is the course of Fortune. Jack, my good friend, may God speed thee, and may thy success be commensurate with thy honest deservings! I need not wish thee more than that!

CHAPTER XVII.

VISIT TO PENSACOLA—DISCOVERY OF MONUMENTS—SEARCH FOR OTHERS—SUCCESS—DEPARTURE FOR "EL ZAPATERO"—LA CARLOTA—LOS CORALES—ISLA DE LA SANTA ROSA—A NIGHT VOYAGE—ARRIVAL AT ZAPATERO—SEARCH FOR MONUMENTS—FALSE ALARM—DISCOVERY OF STATUES—INDIANS FROM OMETEPEC—A STRONG FORCE—FURTHER INVESTIGATIONS—MAD DANCE—EXTINCT CRATER AND VOLCANIC LAKE—STONE OF SACRIFICE—EL CANON—DESCRIPTION OF MONUMENTS, AND THEIR PROBABLE ORIGIN—LIFE ON THE ISLAND.

DEC. 2, 1849.—This afternoon we prevailed upon Pedro—who, with his six stout sailors, had been drunk for a week, but were now sober and anxious to lay in a new supply of reals for another debauch—to take us over to the little island of Pensacola, almost within cannon-shot of the old castle of Granada. A young fellow, whilom a sailor, but now in the Dr.'s service, on half-pay, as honorary man of all-work, averred that upon this island were "*piedras antiguas*" of great size, but nearly buried in the earth. It seemed strange that in all our inquiries concerning antiquities, of the padres and licenciados, indeed of the "best informed" citizens of Granada, we had not heard of the existence of these monuments. The Dr. was not a little skeptical, but experience had taught me that more information, upon these matters, was to be gathered from the bare-footed *mozos* than from the black-robed priests, and I was obstinate in my determination to visit Pensacola.

It was late when we started, but in less than an hour we leaped ashore upon the island. It is one of the "out-liers" of the labyrinth of small islands which internal fires long

ago thrust up from the depths of the lake, around the base of the volcano of Momobacho; and its shores are lined with immense rocks, black and blistered by the heat which accompanied the ancient disruptions of which they are the evidences. In some places they are piled up in rough and frowning heaps, half shrouded by the luxuriant vines which nature trails over them, as if to disguise her own deformities. In the island of Pensacola these rocks constitute a semi-circular ridge, nearly enclosing a level space of rich soil,—a kind of amphitheatre, looking towards the west, the prospect extending beyond the beach of Granada to the ragged hills and volcanic peaks around the lake of Managua. Upon a little elevation, within this natural temple, stood an abandoned cane hut, almost hidden by a forest of luxuriant plantains, which covered the entire area with a dense shadow, here and there pierced by a ray of sunlight, falling like molten gold through narrow openings in the leafy roof.

No sooner had we landed, than our men dispersed themselves in search of the monuments, and we followed. We were not long kept in suspense; a shout of "*aqui, aqui!*" "here, here," from the Dr.'s man, announced that they were found. We hurried to his side. He was right; we could distinctly make out two great blocks of stone, nearly hidden in the soil. The parts exposed, though frayed by storms, and having clearly suffered from violence, nevertheless bore evidences of having been elaborately sculptured. A demand was made for the machetes of the men; and we were not long in removing enough of the earth to discover that the supposed blocks were large and well-proportioned statues, of superior workmanship and of larger size than any which we had yet encountered. The discovery was an exciting one, and the Indian sailors were scarcely less interested than ourselves. They crouched around the figures, and speculated earnestly concerning their origin. They finally seemed to agree that the larger of the two was no other than "Monte-

zuma." It is a singular fact that the name and fame of the last of the Aztec emperors is cherished by all the Indian remnants from the banks of the Gila to the shores of Lake Nicaragua. Like the Pecos of New Mexico, some of the Indians of Nicaragua still indulge the belief that Montezuma will some day return, and reëstablish his ancient empire.

I was convinced that there were other monuments here, but the sun was going down, and having resolved to return the next day, I gave up the search,—not, however, without engaging Pedro to be ready, with men and tools, to return at sunrise the next morning.

Pedro, for a miracle, was true to his word (probably because he had no money wherewith to get drunk); and the dew was fresh on the leaves, the parrots chattered vociferously, and the waves toyed cheerfully with the black basaltic rocks, as we leaped ashore a second time on Pensacola. The boat was moored, coffee speedily made and despatched, and then Pedro's crew stripped themselves naked, and made other formidable preparations for disinterring the idols. But the preparations were more formidable than the execution. They commenced very well, but long before the figures were exposed to view, they were all smitten with a desire to hunt up others,—a plausible pretext for skulking away and stretching themselves on the ground beneath the plantains. I was at one time left wholly alone; even Pedro had disappeared; but the rascals came tumbling together again when I proclaimed that the "*aguardiente*" was circulating. By dint of alternate persuasions and threats, we finally succeeded in getting the smaller of the two figures completely uncovered. It had evidently been purposely buried, for one of the arms had been broken in its fall into the pit which had been previously dug to receive it, and the face had been bruised and mutilated. In this way the early Catholic zealots had endeavored to destroy the superstitious attachment of the aborigines to their monuments. It was, however, sat-

isfactory to reflect that the figures were probably, on the whole, better preserved by their long interment than if they had been suffered to remain above ground. The next difficulty was to raise the prostrate figure; but after much preparation, propping, lifting, and vociferation, we succeeded in standing it up against the side of the hole which we had dug, in such a position that my artist could proceed with his sketch. It represented a human male figure, of massive proportions, seated upon a square pedestal, its head slightly bent forward, and its hands resting on its thighs, as represented in the accompanying PLATE, No. I. Above the face rose a heavy and monstrous representation of the head of an animal, below which could be traced the folds of a serpent, the fierce head of which was sculptured, open-mouthed and with life-like accuracy, by the side of the face of the figure. The whole combination was elaborate and striking.

The stone from which the figure here described was cut, is a hard sandstone, of a reddish color; but the sculpture is bold, and the limbs, unlike those of the monoliths of Copan, are detached so far as could be done with safety, and are cut with a freedom which I have observed in no other statuary works of the American aborigines.

To enable M. to make a drawing of the monument just disclosed, and to relieve him from the annoyance of our men, I deferred proceeding with the exhumation of the remaining one until he had finished, and therefore summoned all hands to search the island for others,—stimulating their activity by the splendid offer of a reward of four reals (equivalent to two days' wages) to any one who should make a discovery. I also joined in the search, but after wandering all over the little island, I came to the conclusion that, if there were others, of which I had little doubt, they had been successfully buried, and were past finding out, or else had been broken up and removed. So I seated myself philosophically upon a rock, and watched an army of black ants, which

IDOLS AT PENSACOLA, PLATE I.

LITH. OF SARONY & MAJOR, N.Y.

VOL. II, P. 36.

IDOLS AT PENSACOLA, PLATE II.

LITH. OF SARONY & MAJOR, N.YORK.

were defiling past, as if making a tour of the island. They formed a solid column from five to six inches wide, and marched straight on, turning neither to the right hand nor to the left, pertinaciously surmounting every obstacle which interposed. I watched them for more than half an hour, but their number seemed undiminished; thousands upon thousands hurried past, until finally, attracted by curiosity, I rose and followed the line, in order to discover the destination of the procession,—if it were an invasion, a migration, or a simple pleasure excursion. At a short distance, and under the cover of some bushes, the column mounted what appeared to be simply a large, round stone, passed over it, and continued its march.

The stone attracted my attention, and on observing it more closely, I perceived traces of sculpture. I summoned my men, and after a two hours' trial of patience and temper, I succeeded in raising from its bed of centuries another idol of massive proportions, but differing entirely from the others, and possessing an extraordinary and forbidding aspect. (See PLATE II.) The lower half had been broken off, and could not be found; what remained was simply the bust and head. The latter was disproportionately great; the eyes were large, round, and staring; the ears broad and long; and from the widely-distended mouth, the lower jaw of which was forced down by the hands of the figure, projected a tongue which reached to the breast, giving to the whole an unnatural and horrible expression. As it stood in the pit, with its monstrous head rising above the ground, with its fixed stony gaze, it seemed like some gray monster just emerging from the depths of the earth, at the bidding of the wizard-priest of an unholy religion. My men stood back, and more than one crossed himself as he muttered to his neighbor, "*es el diablo!*" "it is the devil!" I readily comprehended the awe with which it might be regarded by the devotees of the ancient religion, when the bloody priest

daubed the lapping tongue with the yet palpitating hearts of his human victims!

It was long past noon before we commenced the task of raising the largest and by far the most interesting idol to an erect position. This was no easy undertaking. The stone, although not more than nine feet high, measured ten feet in circumference, and was of great weight. We were but eleven men all told; Pedro said it was useless to try, we might turn it over, but nothing more. Still I was determined it should be raised, not only for the purpose of observing its effect in that position, but because I was convinced that the under side must exhibit more clearly the finer details of the sculpture than the upper, which had been partially exposed above the ground. I gave each man a prodigious dram of *aguardiente*, which inspired corresponding courage, and after procuring an additional number of stout levers and props, we proceeded to raise the recumbent mass. Our progress was slow and difficult, the sweat rolled in streams down the glossy skins of our sailors, who—thanks to the ardiente—worked with more vigor than I thought them capable of exerting. The aguardiente was worth more than gold to me that day. The men shouted and cheered, and cried, "*arriba con la niña!*" "up with the baby!" But before we got it half raised, a thunder-storm, the approach of which had escaped our notice in the excitement, came upon us, as only a tropical thunder-storm knows how to come. I beat a retreat, dripping with perspiration, into the deserted hut; while the men sat coolly down and took the pelting,—they were used to it! The storm passed in due time, but the ground was saturated, and the feet sank deeply in the soft, sticky mass around the "niña." Still, in order to save another visit in force the next day, I determined not to relinquish the task we had begun. But the difficulties were now augmented, and it was only after the most extraordinary exertions, at imminent danger of crushed limbs, that we

succeeded in our object. With bleeding hands, and completely bedaubed with mud, I had at last the satisfaction to lead off in a "*Viva por la niña antigua!*"—"Hurrah for the old baby!" I am not quite sure but I took a drop of the aguardiente myself, while the shower was passing. Pedro and his crew responded by a "*Vivan los Americanos del Norte!*" which, being interpreted, meant that they "wouldn't object to another drink." This was given of course, whereupon Pedro insinuated that "*Los Americanos son diablos!*"—"The Americans are devils;" which remark, however, Pedro meant as a compliment. The figure, when erect, was truly grand. It represented a man with massive limbs, and broad, prominent chest, in a stooping or rather crouching posture, his hands resting on his thighs, just above the knees. (PLATE III.) Above his head rose the monstrous head and jaws of some animal; its fore paws were placed one upon each shoulder, and the hind ones upon the hands of the statue, as if binding them to the thighs. It might be intended, it probably was intended, to represent an alligator or some mythological or fabulous animal. Its back was covered with carved plates, like rough mail. The whole rose from a broad, square pedestal. The carving, as in the other figure, was bold and free. I never have seen a statue which conveyed so forcibly the idea of power and strength; it was a study for a Samson under the gates of Gaza, or an Atlas supporting the world. The face was mutilated and disfigured, but it still seemed to wear an expression of sternness, if not severity, which added greatly to the effect of the whole. The finer details of workmanship around the head had suffered much; and from the more decided marks of violence which the entire statue exhibits, it seems probable that it was an especial object of regard to the aborigines, and of corresponding hate to the early Christian zealots.

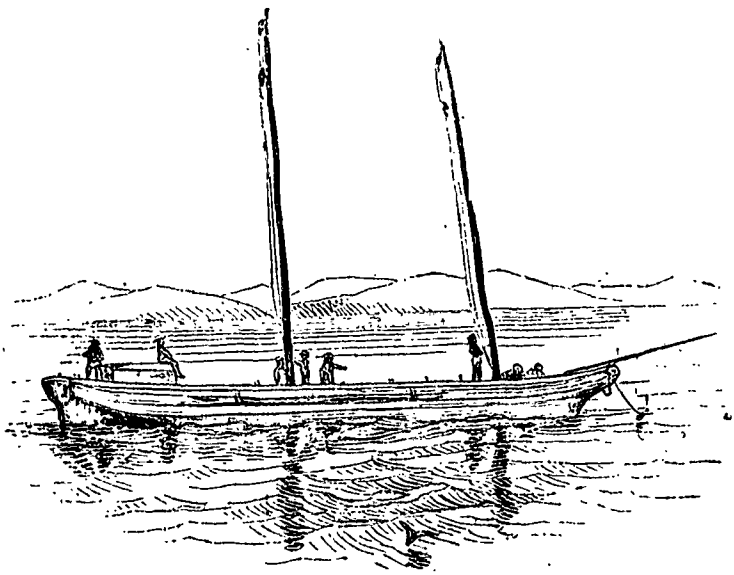
The sun came out brightly after the rain, and although wet and weary, and not insensible to the comforts of dry

clothes and the seductions of a hammock, I could hardly tear myself away from these remarkable monuments—overturned perhaps by the hands of Gil Gonzalez himself, at the time when, in the language of the chronicler, "the great cazique Nicaragua consented to be baptized, together with nine thousand of his subjects, and thus the country became converted." "The great idols in his sumptuous temples," continues the historian, "were thrown down, and the cross set up in their stead." The same authority assures us that "Nicaragua was a chief of great good wit, and though the Spanish captain was a discreet man, it puzzled him much to explain to Nicaragua why it was that so few men as the Spaniards coveted so much gold."

M. returned the next day and completed his drawings, while I busied myself in preparing for a voyage to the great uninhabited island of Zapatero.

The T.'s had volunteered one of their *bongos*, one of the largest and most comfortable on the lake; and as most of this kind of unique craft are only gigantic canoes, hollowed from a single trunk of the cebia, and quite as well fitted, and just as much disposed, to sail upon their sides or bottom up as any other way, it was a gratification to know that "La Carlota" had been built with something of a keel, by a foreign shipwright, and that the prospect of being upset in the first blow was thereby diminished from three chances in four, to one in two. The voyager who has sailed on the restless lake of Nicaragua in gusty weather, with bungling sailors, can well comprehend the satisfaction with which we contemplated "La Carlota," as she rocked gracefully at her moorings, off the old castle on the shore. She was perhaps sixty feet long, and her *chopa* was capable of accommodating four or five persons with lodgings,—something in the pickled mackerel order, it is true, but not uncomfortably, in the moderated views of comfort which the traveller in Central America soon comes to entertain. In front of the *chopa*

were ten benches, for as many oarsmen, and places for setting up the masts, in case the winds should permit of their use. "La Carlota," withal, was painted on the outside, and had a figure head; indeed, take her all in all, she looked a frigate



THE BONGO "LA CARLOTA."

among the numerous strange pit-pans, piraguas, and other anomalous and nameless water-craft around her. Thus far all was well. The next thing was to get a crew together; but this devolved upon the junior Mr. T. After two days of exertion, for there was a great conjunction of *fiestas* at the time, they were enlisted and duly paid,—everybody expects pay in advance in Central America! A fixed number of reals were counted out for the commissary department, and the patron, Juan, solemnly promised to be ready to set sail the next morning at sunrise for the island of *Zapatero*, the "Shoemaker," where Manuel, who was to go along as a guide,

assured us there were many *frailes*, friars, some kneeling, others sitting, and still others standing erect, or reclining as if in death, besides many other wonderful and curious things, among which was a deep salt lake.

The Dr. and myself completed our arrangements over night. After breakfast the next morning, which had been fixed for our departure, I proposed to go down to the lake, supposing that as Juan had promised to be ready by sunrise, we might possibly succeed in getting off by nine or ten o'clock at the furthest. The Dr., however, protested that it was useless to go down so early,—"he was not going to broil in the sun, on the open beach, all the forenoon, not he;" and he comforted us with the assurance that he had lived in the country ten years, and that if we got off before the middle of the afternoon, we might perform any surgical operation we pleased upon either one of his legs! My time was limited, and these vexatious delays almost worried me into a fever. At eleven o'clock, however, I prevailed upon the Dr., much against his will, and amidst his earnest protestations that he "knew the people, and that it was no kind of use," to go down to the shore. There swung our bongo, precisely as we had left it the day before, and not a soul on board! The shore was covered with groups of half-naked women, seated just at the edge of the water, engaged in an operation here called *washing*, which consisted in dipping the articles in the water, and placing them on a rough stone, and beating them violently with a club, to the utter demolition of everything in the shape of buttons! Groups of children were paddling in little pools, or playing in the sand; sailors just arrived were landing their cargoes, carrying the bales on their shoulders through the breakers, and depositing them in creaking carts; here and there a horseman pranced along under the shadow of the trees on the shore; and amongst all, imperturbable buzzards in black, and long-legged cranes in white, walked about with prescriptive freedom! Altogether

it was a singular mixture of civilized and savage life, and one not likely to be forgotten by the observant traveller.

I was, however, in no mood to enjoy the scene,—and the Dr.'s "I told you so!" as he quietly seated himself on a log in the shade, was cruelly provoking. After diligent search, we found two of our crew, with only a cloth wrapped around their loins, lying flat on the sands, their faces covered with their sombreros, and the hot sun beating down upon their naked bodies,—perfect pictures of the intensest laziness. "Where is the patron?" They simply lifted their hats, and reponded, "Quien sabe?" "Who knows?" The eternal "Quien sabe," and uttered without so much as an attempt to rise! This was unendurable; I gave them each an emphatic kick in the ribs with my rough travelling boots, which brought them to their feet in an instant, with a deprecatory exclamation of "*Señor!*" One was despatched to hunt up the others among the pulperias of the town, with emphatic threats of great bodily harm, if the delinquents were not produced within a given time. The second one, a strapping Mestizo, who still rubbed his side with a lugubrious expression of face, was ordered to deposit himself within short range of my formidable-looking "Colt," with an injunction not to move unless ordered. Directly, another recreant was discovered, doing the agreeable to a plump coffee-colored washing-girl,—nothing chary of her charms, as may be inferred from the fact that excepting a cloth, none of the largest, thrown over her lap, she was *au naturel*. He too was ordered to take up his position beside the other prisoner, which he did with a bad grace, but greatly to the pretended satisfaction of the coffee-colored girl, who said that he was "*malo*," bad, and deserved all sorts of ill. "A woman is naturally a coquette, whether in a white skin or black," philosophized the Dr.; "that yellow thing don't mean what she says. I'll wager they have just agreed to get married, or what is the same thing in these countries."

It was high noon long before we got our vagrant crew under our batteries; and conscious of their delinquencies, and not a little in awe of our pistol butts, they really exerted themselves in getting the boat ready. Half a dozen naked fellows plunged into the surf, their black bodies alternately appearing and disappearing in the waves, and towed the "Carlota" close in shore, under the lee of the old castle. The sails, our provisions, blankets, etc., were placed on board, and then we mounted on the shoulders of the strongest, and were duly deposited on the quarter-deck. The bells of the city chimed two o'clock, as we swept outside of the fort into the rough water. It was all the men could do to overcome the swell, and the sweeps bent under their vigorous strokes. Once in deep water, the waves were less violent, but they had the long, majestic roll of the ocean. Here every oarsman pulled off his breeches, his only garment, deposited his sombrero in the bottom of the boat, and lighted a cigar; they were now in full uniform, and pulled sturdily at the oars. Juan, the patron, drew off his breeches also, but, by way of maintaining the dignity of the quarter-deck, or out of respect to his passengers, he kept on his shirt, a flaming red check, and none of the longest, which, as he bestrode the tiller, fluttered famously in the wind.

One hour's hard pulling, and we were among the islands. Here the water was still and glassy, while the waves dashed and chafed with a sullen roar against the iron shores of the outer rank, as if anxious to invade the quiet of the inner recesses,—those narrow, verdure-arched channels, broad, crystal-floored vistas, and cool, shady nooks in which graceful canoes were here and there moored.

Perhaps a more singular group of islets cannot be found in the wide world. As I have before said, they are all of volcanic origin, generally conical in shape, and seldom exceeding three or four acres in area. All are covered with a cloak of verdure, but nature is not always successful in hiding the

black rocks which start out in places, as if in disdain of all concealment, and look frowningly down on the clear water, giving an air of wildness to the otherwise soft and quiet scenery of the islands. Trailing over these rocks, and dropping in festoons from the overhanging trees, their long pliant tendrils floating in the waves, are innumerable vines, with bright and fragrant flowers of red and yellow, mingled with the inverted cone of the "gloria de Nicaragua," with its overpowering odor, with strange and nameless fruits, forming an evergreen roof, so close that even a tropical sun cannot penetrate. Many of these islands have patches of cultivated ground, and on such, generally crowning their summits, relieved by a dense green background of plantains, and surrounded by kingly palms, and the papaya with its golden fruit, are the picturesque cane huts of the inhabitants. Groups of naked, swarthy children in front,—a winding path leading beneath the great trees down to the water's edge,—an arbor-like, miniature harbor, with a canoe lashed to the shore,—a woman naked to the waist, with a purple skirt of true Tyrian dye, for the famous murex is found on the Pacific shores of Nicaragua, her long, black, glossy hair falling over neck and breast, and reaching almost to her knees,—a flock of noisy parrots in a congressional squabble among the trees,—a swarm of parroquets scarcely less noisy,—a pair of vociferating macaws like floating fragments of a rainbow in the air,—inquisitive monkeys hanging among the vines,—active iguanas scrambling up the banks,—long-necked and long-legged cranes in deep soliloquy at the edge of the water, their white bodies standing out in strong relief against a background of rock and verdure,—a canoe glancing rapidly and noiselessly across a vista of water,—all this, with a golden sky above, the purple sides of the volcano of Momobacho overshadowing us, and the distant shores of Chontales molten in the slanting sunlight,—these were some of the elements of the scenery of the islands,—elements constantly shifting, and forming new

and pleasing combinations. Seated upon the roof of the chopa, I forgot in contemplating the changing scenery the annoyances of the morning, and felt almost disposed to ask the pardon of the marineros whom I had treated so unceremoniously.

Our men, for we were now in the cool shadow of the mountain, pulled bravely at the oars, chanting a song which seems to be eminently popular amongst all classes of the people. I could not catch the whole of it, but it commenced:

"Memorias dolorosas
De mi traidor amante,
Huye de mi un instante
Haced lo por piedad."

At the end of each stanza they gave a sharp pull at the sweeps, and shouted "*hoo-pah!*"—a freak which seemed to entertain them highly, although we "couldn't exactly see the point of it." It was nearly sunset when we arrived at Manuel's islands; for though Manuel went with us as a guide, at the rate of three reals per day, he had, nevertheless, a house in town, not to mention a couple of islands, upon one of which was his country-seat, and upon the other his plantain walk and fruitery. His country-seat consisted of a cane hut; but he proudly pointed out to us a heap of new tiles and a pile of poles, and said he meant one day to have a *palacio* on Santa Rosa, for so he called his island. I did not envy him his prospective palace, but Santa Rosa was a gem. Its outer shore, fronting the turbulent water, was lined with immense rocks, within which was a barrier of large trees, draped over with vines, and completely sheltering Manuel's hut from the winds and storms of the lake. Upon the inner side was a little, crescent-shaped harbor, in which our bongo rocked lazily to and fro. A couple of tall cocoa trees, a cluster of sugar-canes, and a few broad-leaved plants at the water's edge, gave a tropical aspect to the islet, which looked to me, in the

subdued half-light of the evening, as a very paradise for a recluse.

Juan proposed to stay here for the night, as the wind was now too violent to permit us to venture outside of the islands; besides, our improvident men had yet to lay in their supply of plantains—the staff of life to the inhabitants of Central America. A little boat was accordingly despatched to a neighboring island, for these indispensable articles, while the remainer of the crew made supper for themselves. A single kettle, their machetes and fingers were their only service, but it was an effective one, and they made themselves as merry as if there was nothing in the wide world left to wish for. For ourselves, a cup of coffee and a cut of cold chicken sufficed.

The moon was nearly at her full, and the transition from day to night was so gradual as hardly to be perceived. Rosy clouds hung long in the west, changing slowly to deep purple and grey; but when the dominion of the moon came on, they lighted up again with a silver radiance. A mass, like a half transparent robe, rolled itself around the summit of the volcano; the verdure of the island looked dense and heavy upon one side, while the other was light, and relieved by glancing trunks and branches. Deep shadows fell on water, with shining strips of silver between, and except the chafing of the lake upon the outer shores, and the prolonged moan of the howling monkey, there was not a sound to disturb the silence. It is true our men talked long, but it was in a low tone, as if they feared to disturb the general quiet. They finally stretched themselves on their benches, and my companions wrapped themselves in their blankets and composed themselves for the night. I did so also, but I could not sleep; it was not the holy calm of the scene—the remembrance of dear friends, or those dearer than friends—it was no sentimental revery, no pressure of official cares, that kept me awake that night,—but it was "las pulgas," *the fleas*

from Manuel's Santa Rosa! They seemed to swarm in my clothing. I waited in vain for them to get their fill and be quiet, but they were insatiable, and almost maddened me. I got out upon the pineta, and there, under the virgin moon, carefully removed every article of my apparel, and lashed and beat it angrily over the sides, in the hope of shaking off the vipers. The irritation which they had caused was unendurable, and, overcoming all dread of alligators and fever, I got over the side, and cooled myself in the water. I did not go beneath the chopa again, but wrapped my blankets around me, and coiled myself on the pineta.

I had just fallen into a doze, when I was awakened by the clattering of oars, and found Juan, with his flaming, fluttering shirt, standing over me at the rudder. It was about two o'clock; and as the wind had abated a little, our patron seized upon the opportunity to run down to Zapatero. He had no notion, in which I agreed with him, of attempting the trip with a light boat, in the midst of the fierce northers which prevail at this season of the year. I had been a little nervous about the business from the start, for I had spent one night upon this lake which I am not likely to forget,—and had exacted a promise from the men to load in stones, at the islands, by way of ballast. They made a show of compliance, and next morning I succeeded in finding some twenty-five or thirty small stones deposited near the first mast, weighing in all, perhaps, two hundred pounds!

A short spell at the oars, and we were outside of the island. A broad bay stretched dimly inwards towards the city of Nicaragua; and directly before us, at the distance of twenty miles, rose the high, irregular island of Zapatero; beyond which a stationary mass of silvery clouds showed the position of the majestic volcanic cones of the great island of Ometepec. The wind was still strong and the waves high, and the boat tumbled about with an unsteady motion. Amidst a great deal of confusion the sails were raised—sails

large enough for an Indiaman, for the marineros of Lake Nicaragua consider that everything depends on the size of the canvas. The "Carlota" was schooner-rigged, and no sooner was she brought to the wind, than her sails filled, and she literally bounded forward like a race-horse. She heeled over until her guards touched the water, precipitating the Dr., who insisted on remaining within the chopa, from one side to the other, amidst guns, books, blankets, pistols, bottles, and all the et ceteras of a semi-pleasure excursion. But, as I have said, he was a philosopher, swore a little, rubbed his shins, and braced himself crosswise. I remained outside, and hung tightly to the upper guards. The lull, if it can so be called, under which we had started, was only temporary. Before we had accomplished a tenth of the distance to the island, the wind came on to blow with all its original violence. The waters fairly boiled around us, and hissed and foamed beneath our stern. I cried to Juan, who was struggling at the rudder, to take in sail, for the canvas almost touched the water, and seemed really bursting with the strain, but he responded "too late," and braced himself with his shoulder against the tiller, holding with both hands to the guards. I expected every moment that we would go over,—but on, onward, we seemed actually to fly. The outlines of Zapatero grew every moment more distinct, and little islands before undistinguished came into view. As we neared them, the wind lulled again, and we breathed freer when we dashed under the lee of the little island of Chancha, and threw out our anchor close to the shore. "Holy Mary," said Juan, as he wiped the sweat from his forehead, "the devils are out in the lake to-night!" We had made upwards of twenty miles in less than two hours.

I crept within the chopa, where the Dr. was rubbing his bruises with brandy, and slept until aroused by the loud barking of dogs. The sun was up; we were close to a little patch of cleared land, upon one side of which, half-hidden

among the trees, was a single hut. The owner, his wife, his children, and his dogs, were down on the shores, and all seemed equally curious to know the object of our sudden visit. Juan frightened them with an account of a terrible revolution, how he was flying from the dangers of the main, and advised the islander to keep a sharp look-out for his safety. The Dr., however, delivered the poor man from his rising fears, and ordered Juan to put on his shirt and pull across the channel to Zapatero. An inviting, calm harbor was before us, but we were separated from it by a channel five hundred yards broad, through which the compressed wind forced the waters of the lake with the utmost violence. It seemed as if a great and angry river was rushing with irresistible fury past us. A high, rocky, projecting point of Zapatero in part intercepted the current below us, against which the water dashed with a force like that of the ocean, throwing the spray many feet up its rocky sides. The men hesitated in starting, but finally braced themselves in their seats, and pushed into the stream. The first shock swept us resistlessly before it, but the men pulled with all their force, under a volley of shouts from Juan, who threw up his arms and stamped on his little quarter-deck like a madman. It was his way of giving encouragement. The struggle was long and severe, and we were once so near the rocks that the recoiling spray fell on our heads; but we finally succeeded in reaching the little, sheltered bay of which I have spoken, and, amidst the screams of the thousand waterfowls which we disturbed, glided into a snug little harbor, beneath a spreading tree, the bow of our boat resting on the sandy shore. "Here at last," cried M., and bounded ashore. I seized a pistol and sword, and followed, and leaving the Dr. and the men to prepare coffee and breakfast, started in company with Manuel to see the "*frailes*." Manuel was armed with a double-barrelled gun, for this island has no inhabitants, and is proverbial for the number of its wild animals,

EMBARCADERO, ISLAND OF ZAPATERO.

which find a fit home in its lonely fastnesses. I carried a first-class Colt in one hand, and a short, heavy, two-edged Roman sword in the other, as well for defence as for cutting away the limbs, vines, and bushes which impede every step in a tropical forest. Manuel said it was but a few squares to the "*frailes*," but we walked on and on, through patches of forest and over narrow savannahs, covered with coarse, high, and tangled grass, until I got tired. Manuel looked puzzled; he did not seem to recognize the land-marks. When he had been there before, it was in the midst of the dry season, and the withered grass and underbrush, stripped of leaves, afforded no obstruction to the view. Still he kept on, but my enthusiasm, between an empty stomach and a long walk, was fast giving place to violent wrath towards Manuel, when suddenly that worthy dropped his gun, and uttering a scream, leaped high in the air, and turning, dashed past me with the speed of an antelope. I cocked my pistol, and stood on my guard, expecting that nothing less than a tiger would confront me. But I was spared the excitement of an adventure, and nothing making its appearance, I turned to look for Manuel. He was rolling in the grass like one possessed, and rubbing his feet and bare legs with a most rueful expression of face. He had trodden on a bees' nest, and as he had taken off his breeches, to avoid soiling them, before starting, I "improved" the occasion to lecture him on the impropriety of such practices on the part of a Christian, a householder, and the father of a family. I was astonished, I said, that he, a gentleman past the middle age of life, the owner of two islands, should make such a heathen of himself as to go without his breeches. And as I have heard the special interposition of Providence urged on no more important occasions than this, at home, I felt authorized in assuring him that it was clearly a signal mark of Divine displeasure. Manuel appeared to be much edified, and as I was better protected than himself, he prevailed upon me to

recover his gun, whereupon, taking another path, we pushed ahead.

After toiling for a long time, we came suddenly upon the edge of an ancient crater of great depth, at the bottom of which was a lake of yellowish green, or *sulphurous* color, the water of which Manuel assured me was salt. This is probably the fact, but I question much if any human being ever ventured down its rocky and precipitous sides. Manuel now seemed to recognize his position, and turning sharp to the left, we soon came to a broad, level area, covered with immense trees, and with a thick undergrowth of grass and bushes. There were here some large, irregular mounds composed of stones, which I soon discovered were artificial. Around these Manuel said the *frailes* were scattered, and he commenced cutting right and left with his machete. I followed his example, and had not proceeded more than five steps, when I came upon an elaborately sculptured statue, still standing erect. It was about the size of the smaller one discovered at Pensacola, but was less injured, and the face had a mild and benignant aspect. It seemed to smile on me as I tore aside the bushes which covered it, and appeared almost ready to speak. (*See Monuments of Zapatero, No.* 1.) In clearing further, but a few feet distant, I found another fallen figure. From Manuel's shouts I knew that he had discovered others, and I felt assured that many more would reward a systematic investigation—and such I meant to make.

I was now anxious to return to the boat, so as to bring my entire force on the ground; and calling to Manuel, I started. Either Manuel took me a shorter path than we came, or else I was somewhat excited and didn't mind distances; at any rate, we were there before I expected. The sailors listened curiously to our story, and Juan, like Pedro before him, whispered that "*los Americanos son diablos.*" He had lived, man and boy, for more than forty years within sight of the island,

IDOLS AT ZAPATERO, No. 1.

and had many times been blockaded by bad weather in the very harbor where we now were, and yet he had never seen, nor ever so much as heard that there were "*frailes*" there!

During our absence, a weather-bound canoe, with Indians from Ometepec, discovering our boat, had put in beside us. They were loaded with fruit for Granada, and "walked into" our good graces by liberal donations of *papayas*, *marañons*, *oranges*, *pomegranates*, *zapotes*, etc. They were small but well-built men, with more angular features than the Indians of Leon, and betraying a different stock. It will be seen, as we proceed, that they are of Mexican origin. All had their heads closely shaved, with the exception of a narrow fringe of hair around the forehead, extending from one ear to the other—a practice which has become very general among the people. I admired their well-formed limbs, and thought how serviceable half-a-dozen such stout fellows would be amongst the monuments, and incontinently invited them to accompany us, which invitation they accepted, much to my satisfaction.

Leaving a couple of men to watch the boats, I marshalled my forces, and set out for the "*frailes*." We mustered twenty-four strong, a force which I assured myself was sufficient to set up once more the fallen divinities, and possibly to remove some of them. As we went along, we cleared a good path, which, before we left, began to have the appearance of a highway.

While M. commenced drawing the monument which still stood erect, I proceeded with the men to clear away the bushes and set up the others. I knew well that the only way to accomplish anything was to keep up the first excitement, which I did by liberal dispensations of aguardiente—the necessities of the case admitted of no alternative. The first monument which claimed our attention was a well-cut figure, seated crouching on the top of a high, ornamented pedestal. The hands were crossed below the knees, the

head bent forward, and the eyes widely opened, as if gazing upon some object upon the ground before it. A mass of stone rose from between the shoulders, having the appearance of a conical cap when viewed from the front. (*See Plate* 2, *No.* 2.) It was cut with great boldness and freedom, from a block of basalt, and had suffered very little from the lapse of time.

A hole was dug to receive the lower end, ropes were fastened around it, our whole force was disposed to the best advantage, and at a given signal, I had the satisfaction of seeing the figure rise slowly and safely to its original position. No sooner was it secured in place, than our sailors gave a great shout, and forming a double ring around it, commenced an outrageous dance, in the pauses of which they made the old woods ring again with their favorite "*hoo-pàh!*" I did not like to have my *ardiente* effervesce in this manner, for I knew the excitement, once cooled, could not be revived; so I broke into the circle, and dragging out Juan by main force, led him to the next monument, which Manuel called "El Cañon," the Cannon.

It was a massive, cylindrical block of stone, about as long and twice as thick as the twin brother of the famous "peacemaker," now in the Brooklyn navy-yard. It was encircled by raised bands, elaborately ornamented; and upon the top was the lower half of a small and neatly cut figure. In the front of the pedestal were two niches, deeply sunk, and regular in form, connected by a groove. They were evidently symbolical. Notwithstanding the excitement of the men, they looked dubiously upon this heavy mass of sculpture; but I opened another bottle of aguardiente, and taking one of the levers myself, told them to lay hold. A hole was dug, as in the former case, but we could only raise the stone by degrees, by means of thick levers. After much labor, by alternate lifting and blocking, we got it at an angle of forty-five degrees, and there it appeared determined to stay. We

IDOLS AT ZAPATERO, Nos 2,3.

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passed ropes around the adjacent trees, and placed *falls* above it, and when all was ready, and every man at his post, I gave the signal for a *coup de main*. The ropes creaked and tightened, every muscle swelled, but the figure did not move. It was a critical moment; the men wavered; I leaped to the ropes, and shouted at the top of my voice, "*Arriba! arriba! viva Centro America!*" The men seemed to catch new spirit: there was another and simultaneous effort,—the mass yielded; "*poco mas, muchachos!*" "a little more, boys!" and up it went, slowly, but up, up, until, tottering dangerously, it settled into its place and was secured. The men were silent for a moment, as if astonished at their own success, and then broke out in another paroxysm of ardiente and excitement. But this time each man danced on his own account, and strove to outdo his neighbor in wild gesticulation. I interfered, but they surrounded me, instead of the figure, and danced more madly than before, amidst "vivas" for North America. But the dance ended with my patience,—luckily not before. By a judicious use of aguardiente, I managed to keep up their spirits, and by four o'clock in the afternoon, we had all the monuments we could find, ten in number, securely raised and ready for the draughtsman. Besides these, we afterwards succeeded in discovering a number of others,—amounting in all to fifteen perfect, or nearly perfect ones, besides some fragments.

The men, exhausted with fatigue, disposed themselves in groups around the statues, or stretched their bodies at length amongst the bushes. Wearied myself, but with the complacency of a father contemplating his children, and without yet venturing to speculate upon our singular discoveries, I seated myself upon a broad, flat stone, artificially hollowed in the centre, and gave rein to fancy. The bushes were cleared away, and I could easily make out the positions of the ruined *teocalli*, and take in the whole plan of the great aboriginal temple. Over all now towered immense trees,

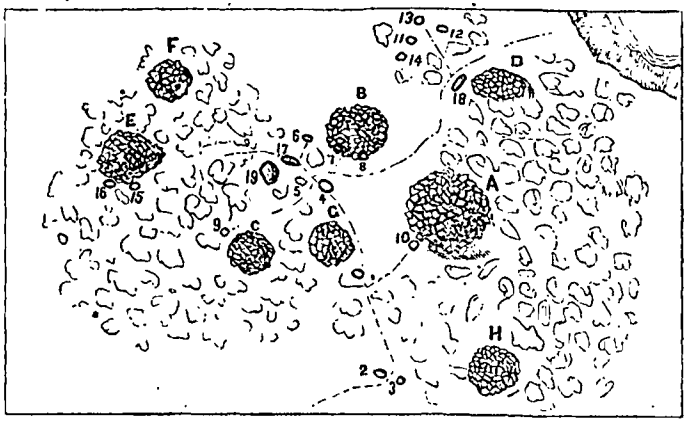
shrouded in long robes of grey moss, which hung in masses from every limb, and swayed solemnly in the wind. I almost fancied them in mourning for the departed glories of the place. In fact, a kind of superstitious feeling, little in consonance with the severity of philosophical investigation, began to creep over me. Upon one side were steep cliffs, against which the waters of the lake chafed with a subdued roar, and upon the other was the deep, extinct crater, with its black sides and sulphurous lake; it was in truth a weird place, not unfittingly chosen by the aboriginal priesthood as the theatre of their strange and gloomy rites. While engaged in these fanciful reveries, I stretched myself, almost unconsciously, upon the stone where I was sitting. My limbs fell into place as if the stone had been made to receive

THE STONE OF SACRIFICE.

them,—my head was thrown back, and my breast raised; a second, and the thought flashed across my mind with startling force—"*the stone of sacrifice!*" I know not whether it was the scene, or the current of my thoughts, perhaps both, but I leaped up with a feeling half of alarm. I observed the stone more closely; it was a rude block altered by art, and had beyond question been used as a stone of sacrifice. I afterwards found two others, clearly designed for the same purpose, but they had been broken.

The relative positions of the mounds or ruined Teocalli, as also of the monuments, are shown in the subjoined Plan. These mounds are made up of loose, unhewn stones, heaped together in apparent confusion. But although they now show no evidences of the fact, yet it is undoubted that they were originally regular in their forms; for we have the

direct assurances of the early chroniclers, that the adoratorios or altars of the aboriginal inhabitants were conical and pyramidal in shape, like those of Mexico, and like them, ascended by steps. It was upon the summits of these that sacrifices



PLAN OF MONUMENTS AT ZAPATERO.

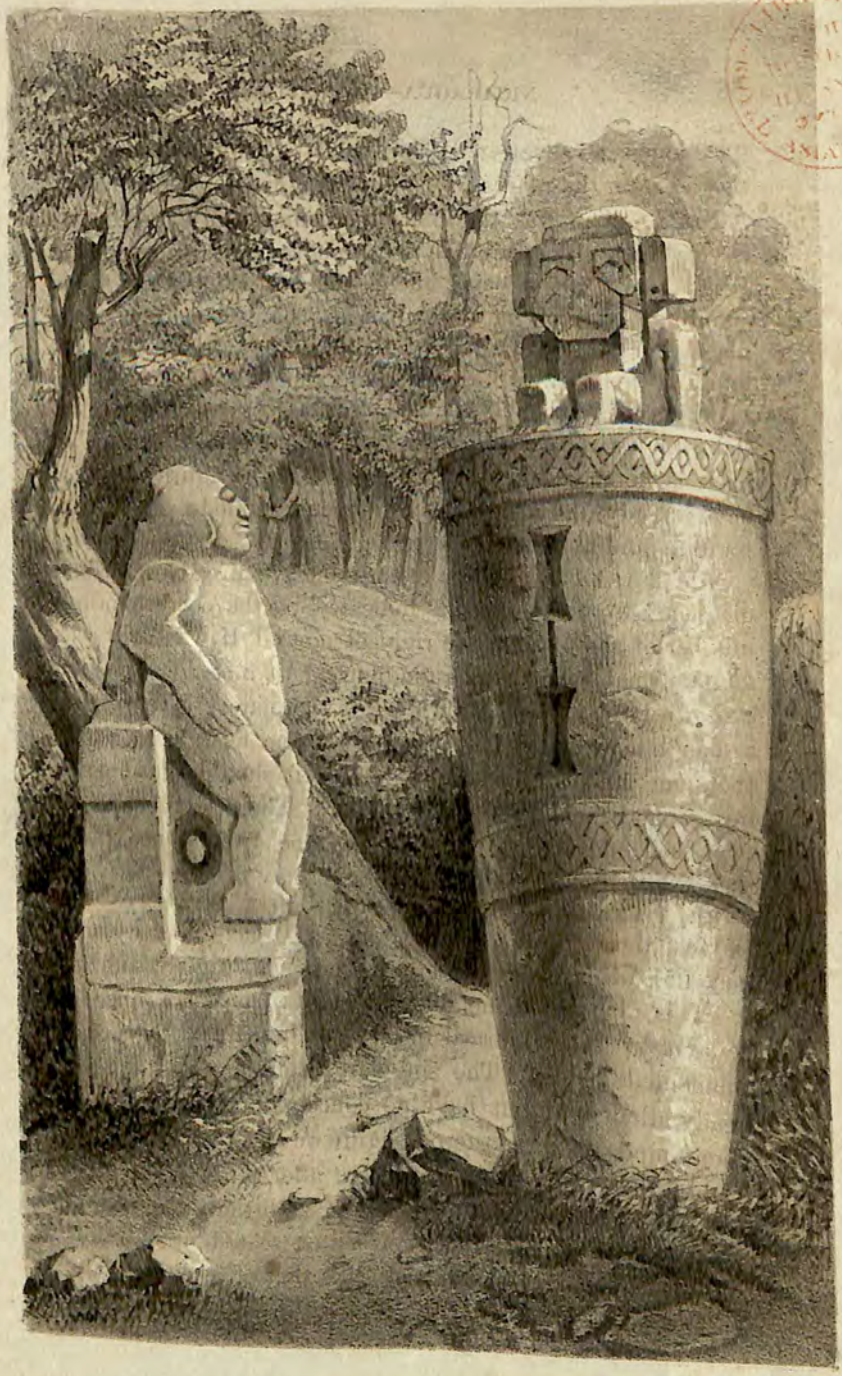
were performed. Their present dilapidation is probably due no less to the hostile zeal of the conquerors who "broke down the altars" of the Indians, than to the destroying assaults of time and the elements. I attempted to penetrate into one of them, (*A*, *in the Plan*,) and removed a great quantity of stones, to the depth of several feet, at imminent risk of being stung by scorpions, but discovered nothing to repay me for my toil. The whole seemed to be a mass of rough stones, largely intermixed with broken pottery, some of the fragments of which were not only of fine material, but showed that the vessels of which they were once parts had been elaborately painted in brilliant colors, still retaining their original freshness and beauty. These mounds do not seem to have been arranged with any regularity in respect to each other; neither do the monuments themselves display any apparent design in their relative positions. It may be

questioned, however, whether the latter have not been removed from the places where they originally stood.

No. 1.—This was the first stone which I discovered, and is very faithfully exhibited in the engraving facing page 52. It is remarkable as being one of the two which were found standing. I think it more than probable that it has been placed in that position by the Indians or others who have lately visited the spot. It projects six feet above the ground, in which it is probably planted about two feet. It is a flat slab, thirty-two inches broad by eighteen in thickness. The back is notched, something like that of the figure which I have already described as having been obtained from Momotombita, and planted in the plaza of Leon.

Nos. 2 AND 3.—The first of these I have already described on page 54. Its position is indicated by the corresponding number of the plan, to the right of mound II. Near it was found a smaller and very rude figure, (*No. 3 of Plan*), which is shown lying at the foot of No. 2 in the plate. It represents a man much distorted in figure, with the head bent down upon one side, and resting on the left shoulder, the arms crossed, and the legs flexed together. The design seems to have been suggested by the natural shape of the stone, which is very little modified by art.

Nos. 4 AND 5.—Although not the tallest, No. 4 was the heaviest figure of the group; and, as I have already said (page 55), was raised to an erect position with great difficulty. It is nine feet in height, and eight in circumference at the largest part, cylindrical in form, and encircled by raised, ornamented bands. The singular niches in front I have already alluded to, but have no conception of their design. When found, the preposterous figure on the top was imperfect, but the various fragments were afterwards discovered, and I was able perfectly to restore it, with the exception of a portion of the face. It is represented seated upon a low block, which has a kind of back, like that of a chair. The



IDOLS AT ZAPATERO, Nos 4, 5.

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top of the cylinder also shelves in from the circumference. Neither of these features can be exhibited in the engraving. It will be observed that the head forms a cross, a feature which occurs in some of the other monuments at the same place, and which recalls to mind the repeated declaration of the early Catholic priests, that the sign of the cross was of frequent occurrence amongst the sacred symbols of Yucatan and Central America. It is impossible to resist the conviction, that this unique little figure, with its monstrously disproportioned head, was symbolical in its design, and probably ranked high amongst the objects of the ancient worship. More labor seems to have been expended upon its cylindrical pedestal than upon any of the others. The whole is sculptured from a single, solid block of basalt, of great hardness. The niches in front are cut with all the clearness and precision of modern art.

Near the figure just described was found another (*No. 5 of Plan*), which is shown in the same Plate. It is however of an entirely different character; and, as I have elsewhere said, represents a Silenus looking personage, with a large abdomen, reclining in a seat, which has also a high back, as will be seen by reference to the engraving. The features of the face are large, and expressive of great complacency. The head seems to have been crowned in like manner with No. 1, but the conical projection has been broken off and lost. The hands rest upon the thighs; but at the elbows, the arms are detached from the body. The point of view from which the sketch was taken does not permit this feature to be shown. Below the figure, and between the legs and the seat upon which it principally rests, the stone is artificially perforated. The whole is cut with great boldness, and has a striking effect. Our men called it "el Gordo," "the Fat," and it might pass for one of Hogarth's beer drinkers petrified.

Nos. 6 and 7.—This first figure (No. 6) is amongst the most striking of the whole group. It is twelve feet high.

sculptured from a single block, and also represents a figure seated, as before described, upon a high pedestal. In common with No. 4, the stone, behind the head, is cut in the form of a cross. The limbs are heavy, and the face equally characteristic with that of No. 5, but grave and severe.

Near the mound, or ruined teocalli, B, and amongst the *debris* at its base, I found the statue represented in the same Plate with No. 6. It had been broken, and the lower part, including its pedestal, if it ever had one, and part of the legs, could not be found. The face had evidently suffered from intentional violence, and the monstrous head and jaws which surmounted the head of the figure had also been much injured. The carving, in this instance, was comparatively rough, and the figure produced upon me the impression that it was of higher antiquity than the others.

A little to the right of this, on the slope of the mound B, about one-third of the way to its summit, stood another figure, somewhat smaller than the last, and half buried amongst the stones of the mound. It was so firmly fixed, as to induce me to believe that it occupied its original position. Like the one last mentioned, it had suffered much from violence, and, the stone being defective, from exposure. I could only make out that it represented some animal springing upon the head and back of a human figure, very nearly in the same manner as represented in No. 10. I did not think it worth sketching. Its place is shown by the figure 8, in the plan.

No. 9.—While cutting a path around the mound indicated by the letter C, which was covered in part by an immense fallen tree, and overgrown with a tangled mass of small trees, vines, and bushes, I came upon a flat slab of stone, resembling a tomb-stone. It had been broken, probably about in the middle, and the upper half, which is represented in the accompanying engraving, alone remained. This fragment is about five feet in length, by three in greatest breadth. The

IDOLS AT ZAPATERO, Nos 6,7.

LITH. OF SARONY & MAJOR, N.Y.

sculpture, differing from anything else found in the island, is in bas-relief, and represents the upper half of a human figure, with an extraordinary head, which appears to be surmounted by a kind of skull-cap or casque. The face bears

MONUMENTS AT ZAPATERO.—NO. 9.

slight resemblance to humanity; the eyes are represented by two holes deeply sunk in the stone, and the tongue seems to project from the mouth, and to rest upon a kind of flap which hangs upon the breast. It appeared to me that the design was to represent a mask; and the whole probably had a profound symbolical significance. Manuel pronounced this to

be one of the "frailes," and said that there was formerly another, in the attitude of prayer, in the vicinity of this. After much search, we discovered it, beneath the fallen tree of which I have spoken, but it was impossible to reach it. The tree was far too large to be cut away with the rude native axes; I tried to burn it, but without success, and was obliged to leave the figure to be described by some future traveller.

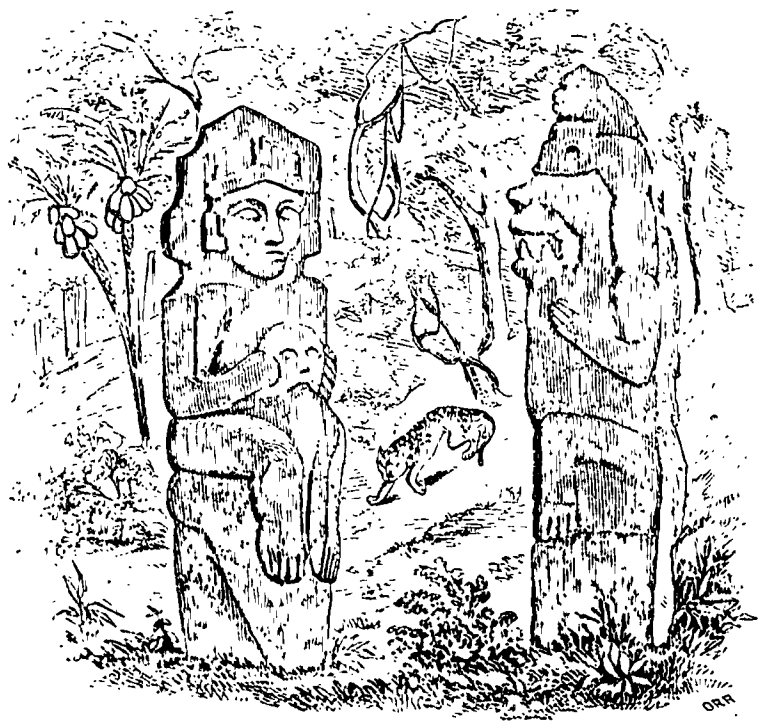
No. 10.—This figure, which is now in the Museum of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington, formerly stood at the base of the mound A. It represents a man, squatted upon his haunches, after the common manner of the Indians to this day, with one hand at his side, and the other placed upon his breast. The head is held erect, and the forehead is encircled by a kind of ornamented fillet. The features are unlike those of any other of the figures found here; indeed, each one had its individual characteristics, which could not be mistaken. Upon the back of this statue, its fore paws resting upon the shoulders, and its hind ones upon the hips, is the representation of some wild animal, grasping in its mouth the back part of the head of the figure. It seems intended to represent a tiger.

No. 11.—In the vicinity of the mound D, were several small and comparatively rude figures. No. 11, shown in the accompanying engraving, is sculptured upon the convex side of a slab of stone, about five feet in length by eighteen inches broad. The figure in this instance also is represented seated. The outlines of the limbs are alone indicated. The head, however, is cut in rather high relief. The expression of the face is serious; the forehead is bound by a band or fillet; and is surmounted by a rudely represented head-dress. The hands rest upon the abdomen, and support what appears to be a human head, or the mask of a human face. I brought this figure away, and it is also deposited in the Museum of the Smithsonian Institution.

No. 12.—This is also a very rude figure. It consists of a

IDOLS AT ZAPATERO, No. 10.

rough block of stone, slightly modified by art, and seems designed to represent a human body with the head or mask of an animal. The mouth is widely opened, exhibiting long tusks or teeth. The stone projects some distance above this

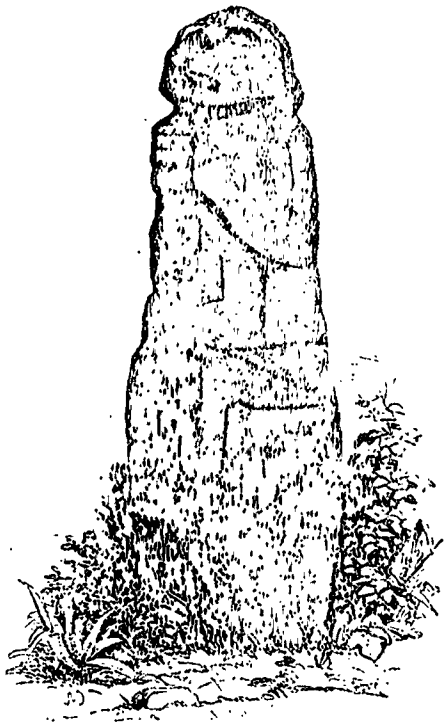


IDOLS AT ZAPATERO.—NOS. 11 AND 12.

head, and has upon each side a round, cup-shaped hole, smoothly cut in the stone. The representation of a human head surmounts the whole.

No. 13.—This is a curious little figure, not more than three feet and a half high. The original shape of the stone is retained, and the art expended upon it is but trifling. The engraving on the next page will sufficiently explain its

various features. The position of No. 14 is indicated in the plan, but it is so much defaced that no engraving of it is considered necessary.



MONUMENT AT ZAPATERO.—NO. 13

No. 15.—Amongst the heaps of stone surrounding the mound situated at the extreme left of the group, were found a couple of statues, very elaborately carved. They were extricated with great difficulty, but amply repaid the labor.

The one first uncovered is a colossal representation of what is here called a "tiger," seated upon its haunches. It is very boldly sculptured. The head is thrown forward, the mouth open, and the entire attitude and expression that of great ferocity. Indeed, as it stood erect, beneath the gloomy

16. 15.

IDOLS AT ZAPATERO, Nos 15, 16.

LITH. OF SARONY & MAJOR, N.Y.

shadows of the great trees which surrounded it, I easily comprehended the awe with which it probably was regarded by the people, in whose religious system it entered as the significant emblem of a power mightier than that of man. The base or pedestal, it will be observed, is ornamented in the usual manner. A considerable portion of it, two feet or more, is buried in the ground. The entire height is eight feet.

No. 16.—This statue was discovered not far from No. 15, and is one of the most remarkable of the entire series. It is upwards of twelve feet in height, and represents a very well-proportioned figure, seated upon a kind of square throne, raised five feet from the ground. Above the head is a monstrous symbolical head, similar to those which surmount the statues in the island of Pensacola. The resemblance to some of the symbolical heads in the ancient Mexican rituals cannot be overlooked; and I am inclined to the opinion that I shall be able to identify all these figures, as I believe I already have some of them, with the divinities of the Aztec Pantheon. The surmounting head is two feet eight inches broad, and is smoothly and sharply worked.

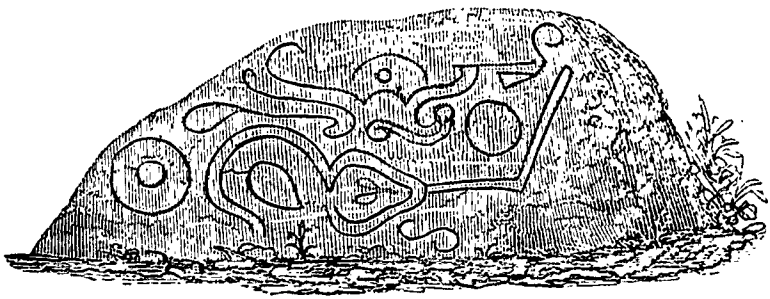
The arms of this figure, as in the case of No. 5, are detached from the body for some distance above and below the elbows The face has suffered from violence, and the statue itself is broken in the middle.

Nos. 17 AND 18 of the plan are oblong stones, modified by art, and were unquestionably the altars whereon human sacrifices were made. There is a hollow place sculptured nearly in the centre of each stone, which it is not unreasonable to suppose was designed to receive the blood of the victims.

No. 19.—This is a basaltic rock deeply imbedded in the earth. The part which projects above the surface is somewhat rounded, and is covered with ornamental figures, sculptured in the stone. Those which could be distinctly traced are given in the accompanying engraving. They are cut with great regularity to the depth of from one-fifth to one-third of

an inch, by about half an inch in breadth. They do not appear to form any intelligible figure.

The shape of this rock favors the suggestion that it was also used as a stone of sacrifice.



MONUMENTS AT ZAPATERO.—NO. 19.

Besides these, I discovered many fragments of other figures, of which, however, I could not make out the design. Some of these fragments were found at the very edge of the extinct crater of which I have spoken, and which, as will be seen by reference to the supplementary plan, is only about one hundred yards distant from this group of ruins. It is not improbable that, in their zeal to destroy every trace of aboriginal idolatry, the early Spaniards threw many of these monuments into the lake. None except those which, from their massiveness, are not easily broken or defaced, were found to be entire. All the others had been entirely broken or very much injured. Not a few have been removed at various times. Those which I have described as still existing in Granada were obtained here; and it is said that some of the most elaborate have been taken by the Indians within a comparatively late period, and either buried or set up in secluded places in the forest. Manuel said that when he was there, about ten years ago, he noticed a number which were not now to be found, and which he was confident had been removed, or were so covered up with grass and bushes as

not to be discovered. I myself am satisfied that other figures exist here, and at other points on the island, which might be found later in the dry season, when the grass and underbrush are withered, and may be destroyed by burning. When I speak of grass and un 'erbrush, it is not to be supposed that I mean anything like what in the United States would be meant by these terms. Around the large mound A, there were few trees, but the whole space was covered with bushes and grass; the stems of the latter were as thick as the little finger, and if extended would measure from ten to fifteen feet in length. When matted together they are like tangled ropes, and are almost impenetrable. The explorer has literally to cut his way inch by inch, if he would advance at all.

The dry season had just commenced at the time of my visit, and the grass was only sufficiently withered to be twice as tough as when perfectly green, without being dry enough to burn. I offered rewards for the discovery of "piedras," but the men preferred to lounge in the shade to clearing away the undergrowth; and although the Dr. and myself worked constantly, we discovered no new ones after the second day of our stay on the island. Manuel was certain that there were one or two small, but very elaborate ones, to the right of the great mound A. I commenced clearing there on the third day, but had not proceeded far, when I was startled by the stroke of a rattlesnake, and the next instant discovered the convolutions of his body amongst the tangled grass. I only saw that he was a monster, as thick as my arm; and as he had the advantage in a fight amongst the grass, I beat a retreat, and resigned the grassy citadel to his snakeship. I was not particulary ambitious to resume my explorations in that direction, and the Indians, who entertain a profound dread of "cascabelas," utterly refused to go near the spot.

There is a part of the island called "Punta Colorada," where the Indians told me there were some remains, and

where, upon excavation, many ancient vases were to be discovered. Some of these, from their accounts, contained the bones and ashes of the dead. This point was on the exposed part of the island; and with the wind from the north, and a rough, rocky coast, it was impossible to reach it by water. As to going over land, the thing was quite out of the question. High volcanic cliffs, walls of lava, and deep fissures and extinct craters intervened.

In respect to the monuments discovered here, it will be observed that, although the style of workmanship is the same throughout, each figure has a marked individuality, such as might pertain to divinities of distinct attributes and different positions in the ancient Pantheon. The material, in every case, is a black basalt, of great hardness, which, with the best of modern tools, can only be cut with difficulty. Like those described by Mr. Stephens, at Copan, these statues do not seem to have been originally placed upon the *Teccallis*, but erected around their bases. They are less in size than those of Copan, and are destitute of the heavy, and apparently incongruous mass of ornaments with which those are loaded. They are plain, simple, and severe; and although not elaborately finished, are cut with considerable freedom and skill. There is no attempt at drapery in any of the figures; they are what the dilettanti call *nudities*, and afford strong corroborative proof of the existence of that primitive worship to which I have elsewhere alluded, as of common acceptance amongst the semi-civilized nations of America.

There are reasons for believing that these monuments were erected by the people who occupied the country, at the time of the Conquest by the Spaniards, in 1522. I am not disposed to assign to them a much higher antiquity. Entertaining this opinion, I reserve what further I have to say concerning them, as also concerning the others which fell under my notice in this country, for the chapters on the Aboriginal Inhabitants of Nicaragua.

CHAPTER XVIII.

RETURN TO GRANADA—A BALL IN HONOR OF "EL MINISTRO"—THE FUNAMBULOS—DEPARTURE FOR RIVAS OR NICARAGUA—HILLS OF SCORIÆ—THE INSANE GIRL AND THE BROWN SAMARITAN—A WAY-SIDE IDOL—MOUNTAIN LAKES AND STRANGE BIRDS—A SUDDEN STORM—TAKE REFUGE AMONG THE "VAQUEROS"—INHOSPITABLE RECEPTION—NIGHT RIDE; DARKNESS AND STORM—FRIENDLY INDIANS—INDIAN PUEBLO OF NANDYME—THE HACIENDA OF JESUS MARIA—AN ASTONISHED MAYORDOMO—HOW TO GET A SUPPER—JICORALES—OCHOMOGO—RIO GIL GONZALES—THE "OBRAJE"—RIVAS AND ITS DEPENDENCIES—SENOR HURTADO—HIS CACAO PLANTATION—THE CITY—EFFECT OF EARTHQUAKES AND OF SHOT—ATTACK OF SOMOZA—ANOTHER AMERICAN—HIS ATTEMPT TO CULTIVATE COTTON ON THE ISLAND OF OMETEPEC—MURDER OF HIS WIFE—FAILURE OF HIS ENTERPRISE—A WORD ABOUT COTTON POLICY—THE ANTIQUITIES OF OMETEPEC—ABORIGINAL BURIAL PLACES—FUNERAL VASES—RELICS OF METAL—GOLDEN IDOLS—A COPPER MASK—ANTIQUE POTTERY—A FROG IN VERD ANTIQUE—SICKNESS OF MY COMPANIONS—THE PUEBLO OF SAN JORGE—SHORE OF THE LAKE—FEATS OF HORSEMANSHIP—LANCE PRACTICE—VISIT POTOSI—ANOTHER REMARKABLE RELIC OF ABORIGINAL SUPERSTITION—THE VALLEY OF BRITA—AN INDIGO ESTATE—CULTIVATION OF INDIGO—VILLAGE OF BRITA—A DECAYING FAMILY, AND A DECAYED ESTATE—AN ANCIENT VASE—OBSERVATIONS ON THE PROPOSED CANAL—RETURN ALONE TO GRANADA—DESPATCHES—A FORCED MARCH TO LEON.

WE spent three days on the island, going early to the monuments, and coming late. The weather was delightful; and each night, when we returned to the boat, it was with an increased attachment to the place. We had now a broad, well-marked path from the shore to the ruins, and the idols were becoming familiar acquaintances. The men had given

them names; one they called, "*Jorobado*," "the Hump-back;" another, "*Ojos Grandes*," "Big Eyes."

At night, the picturesque groups of swarthy, half-naked men preparing their suppers around fires, beneath the trees, in the twilight gloom, or gathered together in busy conversation in the midst of the boat, after we had anchored off for the night,—the changing effects of the sun and moonlight upon the water, and the striking scenery around us,—the silence and primeval wilderness,—all contributed, apart from the strange monuments buried in the forest, to excite thoughts and leave impressions not likely to be effaced. Our stay passed like a dream, and when we departed, it was with a feeling akin to that which we experience in leaving old acquaintances and friends.

We left on the morning of the fourth day. It was Saturday, and I had promised most faithfully to be in Granada to attend a grand ball which was to be given in my honor on Sunday evening. The wind, which had been blowing a constant gale on the lake, during our stay at the island, had partially subsided, and we succeeded, in consequence, in reaching Los Corales about the middle of the afternoon. Here we stopped at a large island, strikingly picturesque where all were picturesque, covered with lemon, orange, and mamey trees, broad plantain walks, and fields of maize and melons, where one of the sailors averred there were other "piedras antiguas." The owner of the island was away, and the boys and women who were left knew nothing of the idols, except that they had been buried,—where, they could not tell. I asked the mistress if I might carry off some of the fine fruit which loaded down the trees. "*Como no?*" why not? was the answer—a common reply in Central America, which signifies the fullest assent. The marineros did not take the trouble of asking, but helped themselves *ad libitum*, as a matter of course. I inquired of Juan, why he did not ask permission to take the fruit, if he

desired it; he looked at me in surprise, and made no answer. He would as soon have thought of asking for permission to breath the air, or use the water around the island.

We had another gorgeous sunset amongst the Corales,—those fairy islets, the memory of which seems to me like that of a beautiful dream, a vision of the "Isles of the Blest,"—and at nine o'clock ran under the lee of the old castle, and landed again on the beach of Granada. Here we found another American, Dr. Clark of Costa Rica, who, wearied of that little state, had come to Nicaragua in order that he might see more of his countrymen, and relieve the monotony of Central American life. We deposited the spoils which we had brought from the island in the house of Monsieur T., a polite and intelligent but very eccentric Frenchman, who lived in a little house on the shore of the lake, and then hastened to our old quarters in the city. The town was in a great uproar; it was the anniversary festival of some pet saint; all the bells were clattering, and the plaza was spluttering with bombas, of which every boy in town had a supply, to be let off on his individual account. They had also "serpientes," serpents, which, when fired, started off erratically, darting from side to side, amongst people's legs, and in at the doors and windows, carrying confusion everywhere, particularly amongst the women, who retreated screaming in every direction, to the great entertainment of the spectators, and amidst the shouts of the boys and loafers in the streets.

The ball "came off" in the house of Madame B., a French lady, whose grand sala was one of the largest in the city, and therefore selected for the "obsequio." I went at nine o'clock, and was received with a flourish of trumpets, by a file of soldiers stationed at the arched portal. The sala was very tastefully ornamented and lighted. It was already full; and not to be behind the Leoneses in their demonstrations of respect for the United States, the assemblage all rose upon my entrance; and the Prefect, who introduced me, would have had

a "viva" or two (*à la Hone* at the Park Theatre, on a certain memorable occasion), had I not besought him "por el amor de Dios" to refrain. The masculine portion of the assemblage was dressed in what was meant to be full European costume, but the styles of coats and cravats ran through every mode of the last ten years. The females made a better appearance, but none of them displayed more style in respect of dress, than "Tobillos Gruesos," and the other female attachés of Señor Serrate's Company of Funambulos, who were all present, including the old lady who swallowed the sword, the girl who had turned somersets, and the "eccentric clown Simon." The elite of Granada had doubtless heard how the fashionables of our cities are accustomed to receive squalling women, pirouetting Cyprians, and hirsute monsters of the masculine gender, remarkable for soiled linen, and redolent of gin, which swarm from Europe like locusts upon our shores, and were also anxious to evince their appreciation of art, in their attentions to "artistes." I flatter myself that the "Jovena Catalina" and "El Ministro" were the bright particular stars of the evening; I did the gravity, and she the dancing.[1]

At eleven o'clock supper was announced in the "comedor," or dining room, which was spread more after the fashion of home than anything I had seen since leaving the United

[1] Since the above was written, I have received the little "Gaceta de Costa Rica," announcing the complete breaking up of Señor Serrate's Company of Funambulos, in consequence of the death of "Tobillos Gruesos," and of the girl who turned somersets. The first died of tetanus, or lockjaw, from a slight wound received by the unlucky turning of a knife used in some of her feats of dexterity; and the *Volteadora*, a martyr to her profession, broke her neck in an attempt to eclipse the "Eccentric Clown Simon." I now feel some compunctions of conscience for my allusions to the Jovena's ankles—they were really not so *very* large—and I mean to make amends, by thinking of her hereafter, not as "Tobillos Gruesos," but as "La hermosissima Jovena Catalina."

States. The champagne, however, seemed most popular, and the applause with which favorite dances were received, after our return to the ball room, it is barely possible had some connection with this circumstance. The enthusiasm was at its height, when "Tobillos Gruesos" and her sister danced "El Bolero," and I availed myself of the opportunity to leave, which I did unobserved. It was three o'clock when the ball broke up, at which time I was tortured out of my slumbers by the fearful wailing of half a dozen violins, played by unsteady hands, and by courtesy called a serenade.

On the afternoon of the day following the ball, in company with Dr. Clark, I set out for the Department Meridional, the capital of which is the city of Rivas or Nicaragua. It will be remembered that this was the seat of Somoza's insurrection. I was desirous of visiting it, not less because it was reported to be one of the richest and most fertile portions of the State, than because here the attention of the world had been for centuries directed, as the most feasible point where the lake could be connected with the Pacific, and the grand project of water communication between the two great oceans realized. Here also was the seat of a Mexican colony, in ancient times, where the great cazique, Niquira, had his court; and upon the island of Ometepec, near by, the lineal descendants of these Indians, and many monuments of their labor and skill, still existed.

We proposed to go but eight leagues that afternoon, to the estate of a propietario, to whose kindness we were commended. When we started the sky was clear and serene, and there was every prospect of a fine evening. We accordingly jogged along at our ease. Our path lay to the right of the Volcano of Momobacho, over fields of volcanic breccia, and amongst the high, conical hills of scoriæ, bare of trees, but covered with grass, which form so striking features in the scenery back of Granada. Around these we found large patches of cleared land, now overgrown with rank weeds,

which were anciently indigo and maize estates, but had been abandoned in consequence of the internal commotions of the country. Beyond these, at about three leagues from Granada, we came to a steep hill, where the narrow road, shut in by high banks, was nothing more than a thick bed of mire, mixed with large, loose stones, amongst which our horses floundered fearfully. Midway to the summit, where the hill forms a kind of shelf, is a copious spring, with a musical Indian name, that has escaped my memory. Here were a number of the people of the Indian pueblo of Diriomo, returning with the proceeds of their marketing from Granada. They were listening with great attention to a white woman, evidently insane, whose slight form, delicate hands, and pale face, half covered with her long, beautiful hair, contrasted strongly with their swarthy lineaments and massive limbs. She addressed us vehemently but unintelligibly, as we approached. I turned inquiringly to one of the Indians; he touched his finger to his forehead and said, "*Pobrecita, es tonta!*"—"poor thing, she's crazy." I asked the man if they would leave her there? "Oh no," he replied, "we must take care of her, pobrecita!" And as we slowly toiled up the hill, I looked back, and saw this rude Indian tenderly leading the poor girl by the hand, as one would lead a child, lifting her carefully over the bad places, and carrying her little bundle on the top of his own heavy load.

Upon one side of the road, just at the summit of the hill, we came upon a figure, something like those which we had discovered at the island of Zapatero. It seemed to have been more delicately carved than any of those, but was now too much injured to enable us to make out its design. It was standing erect, and the bushes around it were all cut away. I afterwards learned that it had been brought to its present position and set up by the Indians of Diriomo, as a boundary mark between their lands and those belonging to another pueblo.

The ground now became undulating; we came frequently where plantain and corn fields, and occasionally snug cane huts, could be discovered at the ends of little vistas, and in shadowy dells. Broad paths also diverged here and there from the main road, to the numerous Indian towns which are situated between the volcano and Masaya. The volcano upon this side is not covered with trees, as towards Granada, and amongst the struggling verdure are broad, black strips of lava, and red ridges of scoriæ and breccia. Upon this side also the walls of the crater have been broken down, and expose a fearfully rugged orifice like an inverted cone, extending more than half way to the base of the mountain. Within this it is said there is now a small lake, and another in a smaller vent, upon one side of the great crater, at the top of the mountain. Around the latter, it is added, there are certain varieties of strange birds, which are not to be found elsewhere in the State,—stories which the naturalist would be more anxious to verify than the antiquarian.

It is a singular fact that, under the lee of this volcano hardly a day in the year passes, except towards the middle of the dry season, without rain. This is due to the condensation of the vapors in the cooler atmosphere at the summit of the volcano, and which the prevailing winds drive over to the south-west. As a consequence, vegetation is very rank here, and the forests are dense and tangled. We got the full benefit of one of these volcanic showers. It came upon us with hardly a moment's warning. At one instant we were riding in the clear sunlight, and the next were enveloped in clouds, and drenched with rain, which soon made the roads so slippery that we could not proceed faster than a walk. We rode on for half an hour, when the rain relaxed, and the clouds lifted a little, but only to reveal the cheerless prospect of a wet and stormy night. The change of temperature in this short interval was also considerable, and I felt chilled and uncomfortable. We held a council, and deter-

mined to take up our quarters at the first house or hut we might reach. We soon discovered the buildings of a cattle estate to the left of the "camino real," and rode up to them. There were two mud houses, and an immense shed, roofed with tiles. Here we found a dozen vaqueros, and we made the usual inquiry, if we could "make their house a posada," and, for the second time in the country, were met with incivility. The women of one of the houses had the calentura, and there was no room in the other. There was the shed, they added: we might go there. I rode up to it and glanced under. The sides were all open, and there were a hundred or two cows and calves beneath, which had trampled the entire floor into a sickening mass of black mire. We felt indignant, and after intimating to the black vagabonds who stood scowling at us, that they were "hombres sin verguenza," men without shame, which in Nicaragua is the most opprobious thing that can be said, we rode off in great wrath. Ben, who distrusted the rascals, had employed the time in recapping his pistols by way of showing them that he should be prepared to meet their attentions, should they take into their heads to favor us with any in the woods. I believe he privately told the spokesman, who seemed surliest of all, that he should delight to have a crack at him.

It now came on to rain again harder than before, and night settled around us, black and cheerless. The ground was so slippery that the horses, even when walking, could hardly keep their feet. None except the Dr. had ever been over the road, and in the darkness he was not certain that we were pursuing the right path. We rode on, nevertheless, gloomily enough, for an hour or two, when we discovered a light at a little distance from the road, in what appeared to be a cleared field. We hastened to it, and found a little collection of Indian huts, in which the inmates hospitably invited us to enter. Their quarters were, however, far from inviting, and as we were now wet through, and it was only

two leagues further to the hacienda where we had proposed to stop, we concluded it was as well to suffer for a "horse as for a colt," and, engaging one of the men to guide us, we pushed on. He took us by the best beaten road, through the large Indian town of Nandyme, of which we could see nothing except long rows of lights shining from the open doorways. We would have stopped with the cura, but he had gone to Leon, and so we kept to our original purpose. Beyond Nandyme the ground was clayey, and our horses seemed every moment on the verge of falling. It was a painful ride, and M., who had a fever coming on, was comically nervous, and finally dismounted and swore he wouldn't ride a foot further. We however got him on his horse once more, and proceeded. We were an hour and a half in going a single league. Finally we saw the light of Jesus Maria's house; our poor horses at once took courage, and carried us to his door at a round pace. A dozen mozos were lounging in the corridor, whom we told to take care of our horses, and then inquired for the proprietor. But he did not reside here now; he had gone off with his family, and the establishment was in the hands of his mayordomo. We requested the men to call this person, but they declined, because he was at his prayers, and not to be disturbed. This was a small consideration with us; we pushed open the door and entered the sala. At one end of the room, suspended above an elevated shelf, was a picture of the Virgin, and on the shelf itself two miserable tallow candles, just enabling the picture to be seen. In front, in the middle of the room, was a long bench, and kneeling at this, with their faces directed to the picture, were the mayordomo and his family. They did not look round when we entered, but continued their devotions, which consisted in the alternate recitation of a prayer in rhyme, uttered in a rapid, monotonous voice. At the end of each prayer all joined in a kind of refrain, or chorus, and dropped a bead on their rosaries. We took off our hats, and stood

still, waiting for the end. Happily the prayers were short; they had already been some time at them, and we had not long to wait. We had anticipated a cordial welcome, and this had kept up our spirits through our uncomfortable ride. But the mayordomo did not seem to be at all delighted; on the contrary, he was positively cool, and his sposa, after eying us askance for a moment, tossed herself out of the room, and slammed the door after her. This conduct determined our course, and resolving to carry things with a high hand, we took unceremonious possession. I ordered Ben to bring in our saddles and place them in the sala, and to spread out the wet saddle-cloths on the best chairs he could find, while we tumbled into the hammocks, and bade the mayordomo authoritatively to bring us some chocolate. His eyes were big with astonishment, and he mechanically gave the corresponding order. The chocolate was brought and put on the table. We took our seats, but the Dr. was belligerent, and bringing his fist down on the "mesa," turned to the mayordomo and ejaculated fiercely, "*pan!* su perro!"—"*bread!* you dog!" Bread came in a twinkling. "Bien! *carne!*"—"Good! *meat!*" and the meat came. I laughed outright; even M., who had been as grave and silent as an owl, could not resist a smile, and Ben was ecstatic.

After supper was over, we began to look out for beds. The Dr. and M. concluded to take the two hammocks, Ben the table, and then the Dr., turning to the mayordomo, told him he wanted the best bed in the house for me. The surly host opened a door leading into a little, dirty room, resembling a dog kennel, in which was a naked, hide bed, and said I might have that. The Dr., I believe, meditated an assault on the fellow, but I interfered, and took possession of the den. I was wet and tired, and cared little for the elegance of my accommodations. I slept soundly, with the exception of being once roused by the crowing of a game cock, perched on the head-board of my bed. I took him by the legs, cut

the cord by which he was tied, and threw him out of the window. He squalled terribly, and I was strongly tempted to give his neck a twist, but thought better of it.

We were up early in the morning, anxious to get away from this inhospitable place. We made the mayordomo produce his bill in writing, with all the items, disputed half of them, quarrelled with him about a sixpence, and finally went off, assuring him, as we had the vaqueros before, that he was "a man without shame."

Beyond this place the country was generally flat, and covered with calabash trees, overgrown with parasitic plants, which almost concealed the limbs and verdure of the trees themselves. The places thus covered, as I have already said, are called "*jicorales;*" and as the trees are usually scattered pretty widely apart, they afford very good pasturage for cattle. Between the various "jicorales" there were swells of land covered with the ordinary forest trees. At the distance of two leagues from our inhospitable quarters of the night, we came to a singular square structure open at the sides, and covered with a tile roof. This we found had been erected by the "arrieros," or muleteeres, as a convenient lodging place, in their journeys between Nicaragua and Granada. The neighboring "jicoral," for most of the year, afforded grass for their animals; and as for themselves, a cup of tiste sufficed. They had only to swing their hammocks between the posts of the shed, light their cigars, and they were "put up," at a very cheap rate. At ten o'clock we reached the cattle estate of "Ochomogo," situated upon a broad stream of the same name, and the largest which we had seen in Nicaragua. The place was a wild one, and surrounded by a dense forest of large trees. It had once been an indigo estate, and the vats in which the indigo had been separated still remained, on the slope between the house and the stream. We were very kindly received, and breakfast was prepared for us with the greatest promptitude. The

mistress of the house was an old lady of great good nature, who, learning we were from El Norte, asked us many curious questions about our country, and was particularly anxious to know about a "Capitan Esmith" (Smith), an American sea-captain whom she had once seen in San Juan, many year ago, and before its seizure by the English. We told her we did not know the "Capitan," which surprised her greatly, because Captain Smith was a man very enlightened "*muy ilustrado*," and a big fellow besides. Poor old lady; she little imagined the extent of "El Norte," and had no conception of the number of "Capitans Esmith" to be found there. She had two well-dressed and really handsome daughters, who brought us chocolate in the daintiest manner, which quite won our hearts by reason of its contrast to that of the mayordomo near Nandyme. The Dr. having prescribed for a sick daughter-in-law, the mistress at Ochomogo declined any payment for our breakfast,—not wholly on account of the prescription probably, for I have no doubt she meant it when she said, "God forbid that I should take money of the Americans! are they not *paisanos*, countrymen?"

We forded the Rio Ochomogo, but had not proceeded far on our way before it commenced raining again, speedily making the roads so slippery that we could not advance faster that a walk. This was vexatious, but not to be avoided; so we protected ourselves as we best could under our blankets and ponchos, and received the peltings without complaint. Three hours' ride in a forest where the trees were larger than any I had yet seen, brought us to an open space, resembling a back-woods clearing in our own country. Upon a knoll in the midst stood the house belonging to the cattle estate of the family of Chomorro of Granada, some of the younger members of which were there on a visit. They pressed us to stop until the next day, but the house was small and already crowded, and we were loth to incommode

the inmates. Besides, M.'s fever was increasing, and I was anxious to get him to some comfortable place, where he could receive proper attentions, while he was yet able to travel. We had a long and dreary ride, until the middle of the afternoon, relieved only by the incident of Ben killing a boa constrictor with his sword, when we reached another large and fine stream called Gil Gonzalez, after the discoverer of the country. It is, I believe, the only natural feature of Nicaragua which commemorates the name of any of its conquerors. Beyond the Rio Gil Gonzalez, we came to open, cultivated fields, "*huertas*" or gardens, separated by hedge rows, along which were planted papaya trees, now loaded with golden fruit. As we advanced, the evidences of industry and thrift became more and more abundant, and passing for a league through broad and luxuriant fields, we at last came to the Indian pueblo of Obraje, the place where Somoza had received his first check by the troops of the government. It was a large, straggling town, a town of gardens, and, judging from the accounts of the chroniclers, built very much after the plan of the aboriginal towns, before the Conquest. The adobe buildings around the plaza were scarred by shot; but everything looked so peaceful now that I could hardly believe war and bloodshed had ever disturbed its quiet.

The Obraje is one of half a dozen towns, situated within a radius of two leagues around the central city of Rivas or Nicaragua, and which are, to all intents and purposes, parts of it. Within this area, therefore, there is a larger population than in any equal extent of the State. At a distance from the centres of political operations, Rivas and its dependencies have escaped the more obvious evils of the civil commotions to which the country has been subject. Its prosperity has nevertheless been retarded, and its wealth diminished, as the State has declined. Yet, in point of cultivation and general thrift, it still retains its superiority. Of

this we had abundant evidences in our ride of a league, from the Obraje to Rivas. The lands were better cleared and worked, and the houses larger and more comfortable than any we had yet seen. To the right was a range of hills, not rocky, volcanic elevations, but smooth, rolling hills, capable of culture to their summits; and between them and the lake intervened a wide plain, two or three leagues broad, with little swells of ground, upon which the houses of the people were usually built. This plain is wonderfully fertile, and suffering less from drought in the dry season, is probably capable of being made more productive than that of Leon; but its greater moisture and comparative lowness render its climate less salubrious. As we rode along, in admiration of the lavish profusion of nature, we, for the first time since we left the San Juan river, saw the *toucan* and one or two other varieties of new and brilliant birds. They were very tame, and evidently felt at home amongst the cacao groves.

The rain had ceased, and the contrast which this part of our ride bore to that of the morning, exhilarated me to the highest degree, and perhaps caused it to make a deeper impression than it would have done under other circumstances. It was late in the afternoon, when, crossing a little New Englandish stream, the Dr. pointed to a large, fine house, sweetly seated in the edge of a cacao plantation, as that of Señor Hurtado, one of the Senators of the State, and at whose urgent invitation I was now in this part of the Republic. The building was elevated, and a broad corridor ran along its entire front, upon which Señor Hurtado and his family were seated, in luxurious enjoyment of the evening breeze. We were recognized, notwithstanding we were disguised by ponchos and stuccoed with mud, long before we reached the house, and the master came down the road to welcome us. Need I add that we were received with unbounded hospitality, and had every want anticipated, and every wish attended to, during our stay?

Señor Hurtado is one of the largest proprietors in the Department, and, with his wife and family, might easily be taken for Americans. They were now living in what may be called the suburbs of the town; their city residence having been destroyed, together with a large amount of property, by Somoza, during his temporary ascendancy. Their present dwelling had also been visited, and the marks of machetas and bullets were visible on the doors and shutters. It had, however, escaped pillage, in consequence of the popularity of its owner amongst all classes of the people of the Department. Connected with the establishment is a large and exceedingly well-kept cacao plantation. Through the middle runs the small stream I have mentioned, crossed by unique little bridges, and here and there forming miniature lakes. The mazy walks were wide and clean, and so effectually roofed in by the broad tops of the cacao-madre, that one might almost imagine himself within the spacious aisles of some grand natural temple.

The morning following, we were waited upon by Don Fruto Chamorro, Prefect of the Department, and the officers of the garrison. Señor Hurtado gave me a fine horse, to relieve my wearied one, and I accompanied them to the town. I was much disappointed in its appearance. It looked dilapidated, having suffered much from earthquakes, to which it is proverbially subject. The walls of almost every building were split or thrown from the perpendicular from this cause, and the façades of two or three little churches, which we passed, were rent from top to bottom, and seemed just ready ready to tumble down. As we approached the grand plaza or centre of the town, we began to see the results of the recent troubles. The doors and windows of the buildings were full of bullet-holes, and the walls had been literally scarified by shot. There must have been a prodigious amount of random firing, first and last. A number of buildings in the vicinity of the plaza had been burnt, or par-

tially torn down, and amongst them were the ruins of the residence of our host, which had been distinguished for its size and superior elegance. Don Fruto, (who, by the way, had in person captured the robber chieftain,) explained to me how the latter succeeded in gaining control of the place, and gave me a little insight into the mode of fighting practised in Central America. To get possession of the principal plaza, and to hold it, is esteemed the primary object of every assault. The garrison always barricades itself there, leaving the rest of the town unprotected; and in this vicinity the fighting almost invariably takes place. Accordingly, at the outbreak of the insurrection, the little garrison, joined by the principal citizens, fortified themselves in the plaza, and waited for Somoza to come on. Of course he took his time, and when quite ready, with his usual daring, attempted to carry the plaza by a *coup de main*. He could not, however, bring his men to charge the barricades in face of the veterans, whose shot swept the streets like hail. He nevertheless persisted in the attempt, but with uniform bad success. Finally he was compelled to make his advances in the usual manner. He commenced cutting through the houses, upon two sides at the same time, advancing from one to the other as fast as the walls could be broken through. The garrison, detecting the movement, advanced in the same way to meet him, instead of waiting to be overwhelmed by numbers in the plaza. The "sappers and miners," if they can be so called, encountered each other in the interiors of the abandoned houses, and in their courtyards; and at the outset, in the bloody hand-to-hand contests which ensued, the superior discipline of the little garrison prevailed. Somoza, at this critical moment, set fire to the buildings with his own hands, and leaving a portion of his men in the houses, made a simultaneous assault upon all the barricades. The garrison, having so many points to defend, enveloped in flame and smoke, and already much reduced, was overwhelmed by

numbers. In the excitement of the moment, horrible excesses were committed, and neither age nor sex was spared. To these excesses, which shocked and alarmed the whole State, the speedy downfall of Somoza and his faction is, in great part, to be ascribed.

Upon one side of the plaza, which was now fitted up for "*un Juego de los Toros*," or a bull-baiting, were the foundation walls and part of the superstructure of a large stone church. It had been planned on a grand scale, and was commenced and carried to its present elevation many years ago; but a severe earthquake occurring, which cracked and otherwise injured the unfinished walls, its construction was suspended, and has never been resumed. The interior is, I believe, now used as a burial place; and a little, low, but compact building at its side is the parochial church. But even this has suffered from the earthquakes. In 1844 a series of shocks occurred, extending through three days. The people abandoned their dwellings, and lived in the open air. The shocks were so severe, that it was almost impossible to stand erect, or even to stand at all, without clinging to trees or other fixed objects for support. On the isthmus, below Nicaragua, and in the direction of the volcano of Orosi, which on this occasion was unusually active, the earth opened in various places, and many of the more fearful results of these convulsions were witnessed by the affrighted inhabitants.

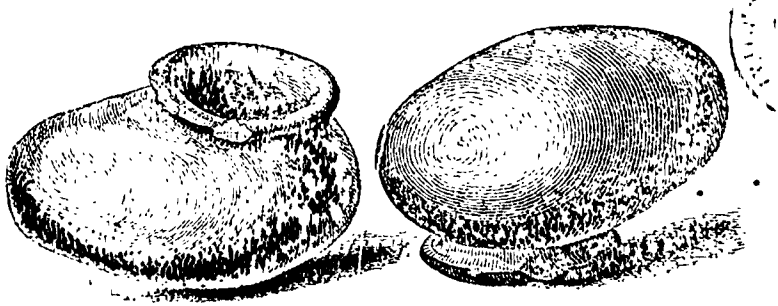
From the plaza, the view of the volcanoes of Ometepec and Madeira, standing in the lake, is exceedingly fine. The regularity of the cone of the former seems more striking than when it is viewed from the opposite direction. I have no question that it approaches nearer the perfect cone in shape, than any other mountain on the continent, not to say in the world.

Upon returning to Señor Hurtado's, we found Mr. Woeniger, a gentlemen of German descent, but a citizen of the

United States, who had resided for twelve or fourteen years in the country. He was intelligent and communicative, and gave me a great deal of information about this section of the State, but particularly concerning the island of Ometepec, on which he had resided for a number of years. He had early cleared an estate there, and commenced the cultivation of cotton, relying upon Indian labor. Things went on very well for some time, and he had imported machinery for cleansing the cotton and manufacturing it, when the Indians, perhaps excited by envious or evil-minded persons, grew idle and unmanageable. And one day, during his absence, a drunken party of them entered his house, violated and murdered his wife, (daughter of a professor in one of the colleges of Pennsylvania,) and then set fire to the building. Some of the miscreants were taken, identified, and shot. Mr. W., notwithstanding this terrible blow, persevered in his enterprise, but with bad success, and was himself finally attacked by a number of his own laborers. He killed one or two, and escaped, abandoning his property on the island, and purchasing a cacao estate on the main-land, at a little place, in the vicinity of Rivas, called Potosi, where he now resided. He represented a large part of the island as being fertile, and well adapted to the cultivation of cotton, but not more so than almost any other portion of the republic. With a proper organization, and the ability of compelling the natives to comply with their contracts, he believed Nicaragua could compete with any portion of the world in the production of this staple, and supply a better article at less price in the markets of England, than the United States itself. This opinion I found was entertained by many other intelligent foreigners, resident in the country, and fully acquainted with the subject. It is this fact, amongst other things, and in connection with the unsuccessful efforts of England to grow cotton in her colonies, in Jamaica, the Antilles, in Guiana, and India, that gives especial significance to

English pretensions on the Mosquito shore, *which is probably the finest cotton growing country of the world.* It is a fact also, which should not be lost sight of by the Southern States of our Confederacy, when we shall be called upon to take a national stand, on the questions which have been raised by the unscrupulous policy of Great Britain in Central and South America.

Mr. Woeniger gave me some information concerning the monuments of aboriginal art found on the island. In the parts best known there had formerly been many idols resembling those found at Zapatero, but they had either been broken up or buried. A group was said to exist at a secluded



BURIAL VASES FROM OMETEPEC.

place, near the foot of the volcano of Madeira, but he had never seen them. The ancient cemeteries are the most remarkable remains of the aborigines. They generally occur upon some dry, elevated place, and are distinguished by an enclosure of flat, rough stones, set in the ground, and projecting a few inches above the surface. Within the areas thus indicated are found, upon examination, many vases containing the bones and ashes of the dead, and a great variety of ornaments of stone and metal. Little gold idols, well worked, articles of copper, and terra cotta figures, are also sometimes found. The vases containing the human bones and ashes are always of one shape, as repre-

sented in the foregoing cuts. It will be seen at once, that the model is that of the human skull. In some of those in which the unburned bones were placed, after the removal of the flesh, (a common practice among the American Indians,) the skull closed the orifice or mouth. Other articles of pottery, some in the form of animals and of fruits and shells, are also found buried both in the cemetries and elsewhere. These are sometimes elaborately painted, with brilliant and enduring colors. A couple of them are represented

VASES FROM OMETEPEC.

in the accompanying engraving. Amongst the articles of metal obtained on the island, and presented to me by Mr. Woeniger, is a copper head or mask of a tiger, which is not unartistic, and displays no insignificant degree of spirit.

The golden idols, are no doubt identical with those which the chronicler describes as "about a span long," and of which the great Cazique Niquira gave Gil Gonzales, upon his solicitation, not less than "one thousand." One had been found just previous to our arrival, which weighed twenty-four ounces, and which had been purchased by a merchant for an equal number of doubloons, and sent as a remittance to Jamaica. I left a standing order with Señor Hurtado to secure the next one which should be found for me, at any cost. But up to this time, I cannot learn that any additional ones have been discovered. Amongst the other curious

relics which I obtained there, was a little figure of a frog, carved in a grey stone, resembling *verd antique*. It is presented of full size in the subjoined engraving. The holes near the fore feet were doubtless designed to receive the string,

COPPER MASK FROM OMETEPEC.

by which it was probably suspended as an amulet from the neck of its ancient owner. This was found in the Department of Guanacaste, near the Gulf of Nicoya.

I had intended to visit Ometepec; and as, upon our arri-

FROG IN VERD ANTIQUE.

val, there seemed to be a prospect that M., after a little repose, would be able to go with us, Señor Hurtado had ordered one of his boats, with a full complement of men, to be in readiness, on the second morning, to take us over.

The Prefect had also sent orders to the subordinate officers on the island to render us every service in their power. But in the meantime M. had become much worse, and during the night was almost delirious with fever, requiring the constant attendance of the doctor. I was consequently obliged to relinquish my visit; but, nevertheless, rode down to the lake with the Prefect and a party of the citizens. The distance is upwards of a league to San Jorge, which stands a little back from the lake, upon a dry, sandy swell of ground. It is finely situated, and the country intervening between the two towns is of surpassing beauty and fertility, and covered with cacao plantations, and "huertas," of the most luxuriant productiveness. It was at San Jorge that the final conflict with Somoza took place, and the buildings around the plaza bore the usual marks of shot; and it was here that the French officer who had been so polite to us at San Carlos, but who had foolishly joined Somoza for the sake of "beauty and booty," was killed. One of the officers pointed out a little depression in the surface of the ground; it was his grave; they had buried him where he fell.

A few minutes' ride from San Jorge, along one of the numerous paths worn by the aguadoras, brought us to the lake. The shore is high and bluff, and there is only a narrow strip of sandy beach between it and the waters. Here were numerous bongos and canoes drawn up on the sand, parties of marineros cooking their breakfasts, men watering their horses in the surf, half naked women, surrounded by troops of children, busily engaged in washing, water-carriers filling and balancing their jars—all the movement and picturesque life which had so deeply impressed me upon my first landing on the beach of Granada. The wind blew strongly, and the waves swept in with a force which surprised me. The rollers outside were like those of the ocean, and a canoe just then coming in was swamped the moment it reached them, and was only prevented from being

overset and stove on the shore, by the crew, who had previously thrown themselves overboard, and steadied it by clinging to its sides. It would have been impossible for us to have got outside, even if we had been in readiness to go to the island. I found that our patron and crew were to have been the same who had taken us to Pensacola, and had vexed us so prodigiously by their laziness. They saluted me with the greatest familiarity, and seemed to be much disappointed when Señor Hurtado told them they would not be wanted. They had evidently counted on a large supply of aguardiente, and on being gloriously drunk for at least a week. I gave them a few reals wherewith to drink my health, for which they invoked the blessing of all the saints on my head.

The return ride was a rapid one, and the young officers who accompanied us amused themselves greatly by racing their horses. Their mode of doing this is very different from ours, and a trifle more dangerous. The rivals place themselves side by side, and join hands, starting off at a given signal. The one whose greater speed enables him to drag the other from his horse, wins; and if the race is in earnest, the least the beaten party can expect to get off with is a tumble in the sand, with a chance of a broken head. There are many fine horsemen in Central America; indeed, a good horse, and the ability to ride him well, are the two things which the "fast fellows" of that country most do covet, and in the possession and display of which they take most pride. For my sole gratification, I presume, one of the officers volunteered some exhibitions of his skill. He requested me to drop my whip a little in advance; I did so, and as he dashed past, at the full speed of his horse, he bent down gracefully and picked it up,—a feat which those who do not think difficult had better attempt. He also borrowed a lance from an Indian whom we met, and showed me the manner in which it is handled by those who fully understood its use.

I was amazed at his dexterity, and not less so at the skill with which one of his companions, using only his sword, warded off the blows aimed at him with the blunt end. It occurred to me that any "gringo" like myself might be a dozen times run through by a lancer of this order, before fairly aware of the circumstance; and I made a mental resolve, in case of encountering "ladrones" with lances, to appeal to my "Colt," before admitting any too familiar approaches.

The morning of the third day found M. no better, and requiring, as before, the constant care of the doctor. Señor Hurtado had, however, planned an excursion across the country to the Pacific. We were to take coffee at Potosi, with Mr. Woeniger, breakfast at an estate of Señor Hurtado's, in the little valley of Brito, ride to the sea, and be back to dinner. We were off at daylight, and rode a league through an unbroken garden, to Potosi, a straggling town like the Obraje, and, like that, a curious compound of city and country, plazas and plantations. Our friend was expecting us, and after despatching our coffee, none the less acceptable because of our brisk ride, he showed us through his cacao estate. It was small but well kept, and constantly increasing in value; for in addition to replacing the decaying trees, he every year put in an additional four or five hundred, each one of which, when matured, according to the rate of calculation here, is valued at a dollar. It requires from five to seven years to make a plantation; or rather, that time is requisite before the trees commence "paying."

Amongst the various aboriginal relics which Mr. Woeniger had collected, on the island of Ometepec, was one of considerable interest, which is represented in No. 2 of the accompanying Plate. It is of stone, about fourteen inches in length, and eight high, and seems intended to be a representation of some animal, *couchant*. It was carefully preserved by the Indians at the summit of a high, secluded

ABORIGINAL RELICS.

LITH. OF SARONY & MAJOR, N. YORK.

LIBRARY OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

point of rocks, where they secretly resorted to pour out libations before it, and to perform rites, the nature of which none would ever reveal. For more than fifty years the padres sought to discover this idol, but without success. Recently, however, its place had been ascertained; it was seized and would have been thrown into the lake, had not Mr. Woeniger promised, if placed in his hands, to remove it from the island for ever. It is now in the Museum of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington.

At a little distance beyond Potosi, the ridge of land which intervenes between the lake and the Pacific, commences to rise. It can hardly be called a ridge; it is a broad plateau, and what upon either side appear to be hills, are nothing more than the *edges* of the table-land. The top of this plateau is undulating and diversified, and resembles some of the finer parts of New York and New England. We had a number of magnificent views of the lake and the intervening plain, as we rose above the general level; the volcanoes of Ometepec and Madeira, now as always, constituting the most striking features in the landscape. Our road was gravelly and dry, and its windings pleasantly relieved by open fields and shadowy woodlands. I was a little surprised to find the valley of Brito, upon the summit of the plateau of which I have spoken, along which it runs longitudinally, and finally, by a succession of "saltos," falls into the Pacific, at the little harbor of Nacascolo or Brito, not far to the northward of that of San Juan del Sur, the point spoken of as the western terminus of the proposed line of transit. It is a sweet little valley, and at one of its sweetest parts is the indigo estate of Señor Hurtado. The building was spacious, built of adobes, with a tiled roof, and surrounded by a high fence of posts, placed in the ground upright, like stockades. Within this the ground was beaten smooth, and, spread upon sheets, were large quantities of indigo, receiving a final drying in the sun, preparatory to being packed for market. Our host, with

hospitable prevision, had, the day before, sent word of our coming, and we found a capital breakfast, and a couple of well-cooled bottles of claret, awaiting our attentions. This disposed of, we went to visit the indigo "maquina." The first point of interest was the dam across the stream from which the water is obtained for driving the machinery and supplying the works. It was well constructed, and a very creditable piece of workmanship for any country. The next thing in importance was the "maquina" itself. It consisted of two immense vats of masonry, situated one above the other. In the lower one a large wheel was so placed as to be turned by water. Near these was a drying house, and other requisite apparatus, the purposes of which will be explained in the following account of the process of manufacturing indigo.

I have elsewhere said that the indigo of Central America, amongst which that of Nicaragua is regarded as of a very superior quality, is obtained from an indigenous triennial plant, (*Indigofera disperma, Linn.*), which attains its highest perfection in the richest soils. It will grow, however, upon almost any soil, and is very little affected by drought, or by superabundant rains. In planting it, the ground is perfectly cleared, usually burnt over, and divided with an implement resembling a hoe into little trenches, two or three inches in depth, and twelve or fourteen apart, at the bottom of which the seeds are strewn by hand, and lightly covered with earth. A bushel of seed answers for four or five acres of land. In Nicaragua it is usually planted towards the close of the dry season in April or May, and attains its perfection, for the purpose of manufacture, in from two and a half to three months. During this time it requires to be carefully weeded, to prevent any mixture of herbs, which would injure the quality of the indigo. When green, the plant closely resembles what in the United States is familiarly known as "sweet clover," or the young and tender sprouts of the locust tree.

When it becomes covered with a kind of greenish farina, it is in a fit state to be cut. This is done with knives, at a little distance above the root, so as to leave some of the branches, called in the West Indies "ratoons," for a second growth, which is also in readiness to be cut, in from six to eight weeks after. The crop of the first year is usually small, that of the second is esteemed the best, although that of the third is hardly inferior. It is said that some fields have been gathered for ten consecutive years without being resown, the fallen seed obviating the necessity of new plantings.

After the plant is cut, it is bound in little bundles, carried to the vat, and placed in layers in the upper or larger one, called the "steeper," (*mojadora*). This vat holds from one thousand to ten thousand gallons, according to the requirements of the estate. Boards loaded with weights are then placed upon the plants, and enough water let on to cover the whole, which is now left to steep or ferment. The rapidity of this process depends much upon the state of the weather and the condition of the plant. Sometimes it is accomplished in six or eight hours, but generally from fifteen to twenty. The proper length of time is determined by the color of the saturated water; but the great secret is to check the fermentation at the proper point, for upon this, in a great degree, depends the quality of the product. Without disturbing the plant, the water is now drawn off, by cocks, into the lower vat or "beater," (*golpeadoro*,) where it is strongly and incessantly beaten, in the smaller estates with paddles by hand, in the larger by wheels turned by horse or water-power. This is continued until it changes from the green color, which it at first displays, to a blue, and until the coloring matter, or *floculæ*, shows a disposition to curdle or subside. This is sometimes hastened by the infusion of certain herbs. It is then allowed to settle, and the water is carefully drawn off. The pulp granulates, at which time it resembles a fine, soft clay; after which it is put into bags to drain, and then

spread on cloths, in the sun, to dry. When properly dried, it is carefully selected according to its quality, and packed in hide cases, 150 lbs. each, called *ceroons*. The quality has not less than nine gradations, the best being of the highest figure. From 6 to 9 are called *flores*, and are the best; from 3 to 6, *cortes;* from 1 to 3, inclusive, *cobres*. The two poorer qualities do not pay expenses. A *mansana* of one hundred yards square, produces, on an average, about one ceroon at each cutting. After the plant has passed through the vat, it is required by law that it shall be dried and burnt; because, in decomposing, it generates, by the million, an annoying insect called the "indigo fly."

Thus the indigo plant requires constant attention during its growth, and must be cut at a particular period, or it is valueless. The subsequent processes are delicate, and require the utmost care. It will readily be understood, therefore, that the production of this staple would suffer most from revolutions and disturbances of the country, when it is impossible to obtain labor, or where the laborers are liable at any moment to be impressed for the army. As a consequence, it has greatly declined; many fine estates have been entirely abandoned, and the export of the article reduced to less than a fifth of what it once was. Its production is now chiefly confined to San Salvador, where industry is better organized than in any of the other States.

From Señor Hurtado's hacienda, we rode along the shaded banks of the stream, to the little Indian town of Brita. It has nothing to distinguish it except its picturesque situation, and its unique little church, painted after the Indian fashion, with all the colors of the rainbow,—here a row of urns, there a line of flowers, curiously festooned, and the whole altogether more resembling the flaming front of a wooden clock from Yankeeland, than anything else under heaven. Near this place was a decayed cacao estate, belonging to a family of some notability in the country, but now only rep-

resented in the female line. The avenue leading to the mansion had once been grand; it was still lined with magnificent trees. The house was now dilapidated, and honey bees had dug out immense establishments in the adobe walls, around which they swarmed in a cloud. A dozen stout, half-naked fellows were lounging on the corridor, surrounded by an equal number of mangy dogs, which showed their teeth and snarled around our legs. The wife of the mayordomo, himself a swarthy mestizo, was a fair, delicate girl, who looked wonderfully out of place amongst her rough companions. I obtained from her—for she was as kind and gentle as the masculines were morose and ugly—the stone vase, No. 1, of the Plate facing page 92. It had been brought to light but a short time before, in digging the posts for a cattle shed. It is about eighteen inches in height, and of proportionate diameter, cut from a single block of granite rock. There were handles, in the shape of a human head, upon each side, and the intermediate space, on a raised band around the middle, was tastefully ornamented, as shown in the engraving.

Reserving for another place the observations which I this day made, in respect to the proposed route for a ship-canal to connect the lake and ocean at this point, I have only to add that the day was delightfully spent, and that our return to Rivas, in the cool of the evening, was one of the pleasantest rides that I enjoyed in the country. I found that during my absence, the Prefect had sent me a very singular relic of antiquity, which had been exhumed some time previously, near the city, which is represented by Fig. 3, in the same Plate with the vase just described. It is of the same material with the vase, and is ornamented in similar style, but more elaborately. It will be observed that one of the projecting arms or ornaments on the side represented in the sketch, is broken off; it probably was analogous to that shown in the front. I cannot imagine what was the purpose

of this singular piece of sculpture, unless designed as a pedestal for an idol, or a seat for the dignitaries of aboriginal times, for both of which purposes it is very well adapted. It is about twenty inches in height; and, in company with the vase, is deposited in the Museum of the Smithsonian Institution at Washington.

M., I found, was getting better of his fever; the dangerous stage was passed, but he would be unable to endure any violent exercise for a week. I could not, therefore, depend upon him to accomplish the primary objects I had in view in visiting this section of the State, and as I expected important despatches from Government at Granada, I resolved, notwithstanding the solicitations of my host, to leave M. in care of the doctor, and return. The next morning was fixed for my departure. At sunrise, Señor Hurtado had everything prepared, including a man to act as guide, and persisted in accompanying me to the Obraje, where, after extending an earnest invitation to visit him again, he left me and returned.

We had been nearly the whole of one day in riding the ten leagues from the Ochomogo to Rivas, but I now went over the same ground before breakfasting. The hostess at Ochomogo was still puzzling her head how it could be possible that I did not know "Capitan Esmith, un hombre muy ilustrado, *y gordo!*" "Captain Smith, a very enlightened man, *and fat!*"

Passing Ochomogo, my guide took me by a new, and as he said, shorter path, from that by which we came; so I missed the satisfaction of calling the inhospitable mayordomo a shameless fellow, and lost the opportunity of seeing Nandyme by daylight. Although the distance is called sixty miles, the sun was yet high in the west when I arrived within sight of Granada. A light shower was just sweeping over it, spanned by a beautiful rainbow, like the portal of Paradise. As I came nearer, I heard the eternal banging of bombas, and rode into the city amidst serpientes, waving

flags, and the other eye and ear-wearying nonsense of a fiesta. I would have gone through the principal street, but the people all at once fell on their knees, and I was saluted by a hundred voices, "Quita su sombrero!"—"Take off your hat!" I looked down the street, and saw a procession approaching at the other end, preceded by a score of squeaking violins and a squad of soldiers, and followed by a regiment of saints' effigies, borne on men's shoulders. My guide dismounted and dropped on his marrow bones in the mud, while Ben and myself turned down a side street, leaving the guide to follow when he got ready. I was heartily tired of fiestas and saints, and began to think if the people prayed less and worked more, they would be doing both God and man better service.

My despatches had arrived that afternoon, with three months' later dates, for we had heard nothing from home during that period, except through British agents, who took a malicious satisfaction in showing us how much more efficient, active, and intelligent is the British Government, in the conduct of its foreign relations, than our own. It was seldom that despatches ever reached the American officers in this country, and then only long after date. I got bushels of letters, papers, and documents, all directed to my predecessor, at eight, twelve, and even eighteen months after they were despatched from Washington. The English agents were never thirty days behindhand. The first intimation of the declaration of war with Mexico, received by our naval commander in the Pacific, was through the British Admiral, and after that officer had taken such measures as he thought proper under the circumstances.[1] It was only the superior swift-

[1] "During the diplomatic employments with which I have been so long honored by the favor of my country, I have been constantly mortified by the dependence in which our foreign agents are left upon a foreign and rival government, for the transmission of their correspondence."—Hon. Henry Wheaton, *to the Department of State, Dec.* 1845.

ness of American ships which enabled us to anticipate the seizure of California by Great Britain, under pretext of securing its Mexican debts. On such a small matter as *that*, turned the great question of American predominance in the Pacific, and American maritime and commercial ascendancy throughout the world. In appointing even so insignificant an officer as a despatch agent, our government should not forget this fact, nor neglect to ask itself the question, "What if England had got California?"

The matters contained in my letters required my immediate presence in Leon. Accordingly I left the next morning, and accomplished the entire distance, one hundred and twenty miles, in a day and a half,—or, counting from Nicaragua, one hundred and eighty miles in two days and a half, being at the rate of seventy-two miles a day. This was done with the same horse, one which had cost me but thirty dollars, and which came into Leon at the same pace with which he had left Nicaragua, and apparently as unwearied as then. And yet I suffered nothing from fatigue, and, notwithstanding all that I had heard said about the debilitating effects of the climate, felt as vigorous as I had ever done, under the most favorable circumstances, at home.

I found two soldiers pacing the corridor of my house, which greatly puzzled me. My old friend Padre Cartine, I afterwards found, had dreamed a dream, to the purport that robbers were seeking to enter it, and had given the General no peace until he had stationed a guard there to keep "watch and ward" day and night. Poor old Padre! It is precious little the "ladrones" would have got, had the dream proved true.

And thus terminated my second antiquarian expedition. I have only given an outline of the incidents which befel me, and shall reserve all speculation upon my discoveries for another place, viz., the chapter on the Aboriginal Inhabitants of Nicaragua, to which those who read for some other purpose than mere amusement, are respectfully referred.

CHAPTER XIX.

VOLCANOES OF CENTRAL AMERICA; THEIR NUMBER—VOLCANO OF JORULLO—ISALCO—THE VOLCANIC CHAIN OF THE MARABIOS—INFERNALES—"LA BAILA DE LOS DEMONIOS"—VOLCANIC OUTBURST ON THE PLAIN OF LEON—VISIT TO THE NEW VOLCANO, AND NARROW ESCAPE—BAPTIZING A VOLCANO—ERUPTION OF COSEGUINA—CELEBRATION OF ITS ANNIVERSARY—SYNCHRONOUS EARTHQUAKES—LATE EARTHQUAKES IN CENTRAL AMERICA—VOLCANO OF TELICA—EL VOLCAN VIEJO—SUBTERRANEAN LAVA BEDS—ACTIVITY OF THE VOLCANOES OF THE MARABIOS IN THE 16th CENTURY—THE PHENOMENA OF EARTHQUAKES—EARTHQUAKE OF OCT. 27, 1849—VOLCANIC FEATURES OF THE COUNTRY—EXTINCT CRATERS—VOLCANIC LAKES—THE VOLCANO OF NINDIRI OR MASAYA—DESCENT INTO IT BY THE FRAY BLAS DE CASTILLO—EXTRAORDINARY DESCRIPTION.

No equal extent of the American continent, perhaps of the globe, possesses so many volcanoes, active and extinct, or exhibits so many traces of volcanic action, as Central America; that is to say, the region embraced between the Isthmus of Tehuantepec and that of Panama, or Darien. In the words of Mr. Stephens, the entire Pacific coast of this remarkable country "bristles with volcanic cones," which form a conspicuous feature in every landscape, rising above the plains and undulating hills, and often from the edges of the great lakes, with the regularity and symmetry of the pyramids. It is a matter of surprise and regret that, affording as it does, so excellent a field for studying the grand and interesting phenomena connected with volcanoes and earthquakes, this country has not more particularly attracted the attention of scientific men, and especially of those who ascribe to

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igneous and volcanic agency so important a part in the physical changes which our planet has undergone. Humboldt did not pass through Central America, although fully impressed with the importance of its geological and topographical investigation; a deficiency which he deplores in many places in his published researches. Nor am I aware that any but very partial and imperfect accounts have been given to the world of the volcanoes of this country, and those have been by persons claiming no consideration as scientific men. Recognizing fully my own deficiency in this respect, I should not think of venturing on the subject, except in the hope of directing anew the attention of competent persons to it, and thus contributing to supply the desideratum.

The volcanoes of Central America are all situated on the Pacific coast; the eastern slope of the continent consisting of broken mountain ranges, which exhibit few traces of volcanic action. In fact, they occur almost in a right line, running due N. W. and S. E., commencing with the high volcano of Cartago in Costa Rica (11,480 feet high), from the summit of which both oceans are visible, to Citlaltepetl, in the Department of Vera Cruz, in Mexico. There are several hundred volcanic peaks and extinct craters on this line, the most remarkable of which are Cartago, or Irasu, Turrialva, Barba, and Vatos, (9,840 feet high,) in Costa Rica; Abogado, Cerro Pelas, Miriballes, Tenerio, Rincon de la Vieja, Orosi, Madeira, Ometepec, Zapatero, Guanapepe, Guanacaure, Solentinami, Momobacho, Masaya or Nindiri, Managua, Momotombo, (6,500 feet high,) Las Pilas, Acosusco, Orota, Telica, Santa Clara, El Viejo, (6,000 feet high,) Coseguina, and Joltépec, in Nicaragua; El Tigre, and Nacaome, in Honduras; Amapala or Conchagua, San Salvador, San Miguel, San Vicenté, Isalco, Paneon, and Santa Ana, in San Salvador; Pacaya, Volcan de Agua, Volcan de Fuego, Incontro, Acatenango, Atitlan, Tesanuelco, Sapotitlan, Amilpas, Quesaltenango, and Soconusco, in Guatemala. There are

many others which are nameless, or of which the names are unknown. Some ten or twelve of those above named are said to be "*vivo*," alive,—that is to say, they throw out smoke, and exhibit other evidences of vitality. But three or four, however, can be said to be active at present, of which, Isalco, in San Salvador, is the most remarkable, having been formed within the last eighty years, and within the recollection of persons now living.

This volcano, and that of Jorullo, in Mexico, described by Humboldt, are, I believe, all that have originated on the continent since the Discovery. It arose from the plain in 1770, and covers what was then a fine cattle hacienda or estate. The occupants on this estate were alarmed by subterraneous noises, and shocks of earthquakes, about the end of 1769, which continued to increase in loudness and strength until the 23d of the February following, when the earth opened about half-a-mile from the dwellings on the estate, sending out lava, accompanied by fire and smoke. The inhabitants fled; but the *vaqueros*, or herdsmen, who visited the estate daily, reported a constant increase in the smoke and flame, and that the ejection of lava was at times suspended, and vast quantities of ashes, cinders, and stones sent out instead, forming an increasing cone around the vent, or crater. This process was repeated for a long period, but for many years the volcano has thrown out no lava. It has, however, remained in a state of constant eruption, the explosions occurring every sixteen minutes and a quarter, with a noise like the discharge of a park of artillery, accompanied by a dense smoke and a cloud of ashes and stones, which fall upon every side, and add to the height of the cone. It is now about 1,500 or 2,000 feet in height, and I am informed by an intelligent West Indian gentleman, Dr. Drivon, who has known it for the past twenty-five years, that within that period it has increased about one-third. At some times the explosions are more violent than at others,

and the ejected matter greater in amount; but it is said the discharges are always regular. With the wind in a favorable direction, an annoying and sometimes injurious quantity of fine ashes or powder is carried to the city of Sonsonate, twelve miles distant. The volcano of Jorullo rose, I believe, in a single night; but, as we have seen, Isalco is the result of long continued deposits, and it seems to me that most of the volcanoes of Central America, including some of the largest, have been formed in like manner. In fact, I have been a personal witness of the origin of a new volcano, which, if it has not met a premature extinguishment, bids fair to add another high cone to those which now stud the great plain of Leon.

This plain is traversed by a succession of volcanic cones, commencing with the gigantic Momotombo, standing boldly out into the Lake of Managua, and ending with the memorable Coseguina, projecting its base not less boldly into the ocean, constituting the line of the Marabios. Fourteen distinct volcanoes occur within one hundred miles, on this line, all of which are visible at the same time. They do not form a continuous range, but stand singly, the plain between them generally preserving its original level. They have not been "thrust up," as the volcano of Jorullo seemed to have been, elevating the strata around them; although it is not certain but the original volcanic force, being general in its action, raised up the whole plain to its present level. All these are surrounded by beds of lava, *mal pais*, extending, in some cases, for leagues in every direction. The lava current in places seems to have spread out in sheets, flowing elsewhere, however, in high and serpentine ridges, resembling Cyclopean walls, often capriciously enclosing spaces of arable ground, in which vegetation is luxuriant: these are called by the natives *corrales*, yards. Hot springs, and openings in the ground emitting hot air, smoke, and steam, called *infernales*, are common around the bases of these volcanoes. For large

spaces the whole ground seems resting upon a boiling cauldron, and is encrusted with mineral deposits. There are also many places where the ground is depressed and bare, resembling a honey-combed, ferruginous clay-pit, from which sulphurous vapors are constantly rising, destroying vegetation in the vicinity, but especially to the leeward, where they are carried by the wind. By daylight nothing is to be seen at these places, except a kind of tremulous motion of the heated atmosphere near the surface of the ground. But at night, the whole is lighted by a flickering, bluish, and etherial flame, like that of burning spirits, which spreads at one moment over the whole surface, at the next shoots up into high spires, and then diffuses itself again, in a strange, unearthly manner. This is called by the "gente del campo," the people of the fields, "la baile de los Demonios," the Dance of the Devils.

Around some of these volcanoes, that is to say those having visible craters, are many smaller cones, of great regularity, composed of ashes, volcanic sand, and triturated stones, resembling septaria. They seldom support anything but a few dwarf trees, and are covered with coarse grass. This grass, when green, gives them a beautiful emerald appearance. In the dry season this color is exchanged for yellow, which, after the annual burning, gives place to black. They constitute with their changes very singular and striking features in the Central American landscape.

On the 11th and 12th days of April, 1850, rumbling sounds, resembling thunder, were heard in the city of Leon. They seemed to proceed from the direction of the volcanoes, and were supposed to come from the great volcano of Momotombo, which often emits noises, and shows other symptoms of activity, besides sending out smoke. This volcano, however, on this occasion exhibited no unusual indications. The sounds increased in loudness and frequency on the night of the 12th, and occasional tremors of the earth

were felt as far as Leon; which, near the mountains, were quite violent, terrifying the inhabitants. Early on the morning of Sunday, the 13th, an orifice opened near the base of the long-extinguished volcano of Las Pilas, about twenty miles distant from Leon. The throes of the earth at the time of the outburst were very severe in the vicinity, resembling, from the accounts of the natives, a series of concussions. The precise point where the opening was made might be said to be in the plain; it was, however, somewhat elevated by the lava which had ages before flowed down from the volcano, and it was through this bed of lava that the eruption took place. No people reside within some miles of the spot; consequently I am not well informed concerning the earlier phenomena exhibited by the new volcano. It seems, however, that the outburst was attended with much flame, and that, at first, quantities of melted matter were ejected irregularly in every direction. Indeed, this was clearly the case, as was shown upon my visit to the spot some days thereafter. For a wide distance around were scattered large flakes resembling freshly cast iron. This irregular discharge continued only for a few hours, and was followed by a current of lava, which flowed down the slope of the land toward the west, in the form of a high ridge, rising above the tops of the trees, and bearing down everything which opposed its progress. While this flow continued, which it did for the remainder of the day, the earth was quiet, excepting only a very slight tremor, which was not felt beyond a few miles. Upon the 14th, however, the lava stopped flowing, and an entirely new mode of action followed. A series of eruptions commenced, each lasting about three minutes, succeeded by a pause of equal duration. Each eruption was accompanied by concussions of the earth, (too slight, however, to be felt at Leon,) attended also by an outburst of flame, a hundred feet or more in height. Showers of red-hot stones were also ejected with each eruption to the height of several hundred feet.

Most of these fell back into the mouth or crater, the rest falling outward, and gradually building up a cone around it. By the attrition of this process, the stones became more or less rounded, thus explaining a peculiarity in the volcanic stones already alluded to. These explosions continued uninterruptedly for seven days, and could be accurately observed from Leon in the night. Upon the morning of the 22d, accompanied by Dr. J. W. Livingston, U. S. Consul, I set out to visit the spot. No one had ventured near it, but we had no difficulty in persuading some *vaqueros*, from the haciendas of Orota, to act as guides. We rode with difficulty over beds of lava, until within about a mile and a-half of the place, proceeding thence on foot. In order to obain a full view of the new volcano, we ascended a high, naked ridge of scoriæ, entirely overlooking it. From this point it presented the appearance of an immense kettle, upturned, with a hole knocked in the bottom, forming the crater. From this, upon one side ran off the lava stream, yet fervent with heat, and sending off its tremulous radiations. The eruptions had ceased that morning, but a volume of smoke was still emitted, which the strong north-east wind swept down in a trailing current along the tree-tops.

The cone was patched over with yellow, the color of the crystallized sulphur deposited by the hot vapors passing up amongst the loose stones. The trees all around were stripped of their limbs, leaves, and bark, and resembled so many giant skeletons. Tempted by the quietude of the volcano, and anxious to inspect it more closely, in spite of the warnings of our guides, we descended from our position, and going to the windward, scrambled over the intervening lava beds, through patches of thorny cacti and agaves, toward the cone. On all sides we found the flakes of melted matter which had been thrown out on the first day of the eruption, and which had moulded themselves over whatever they fell upon. We had no difficulty in reaching the base of the

cone, the wind driving off the smoke and vapors to the leeward. It was perhaps a hundred and fifty or two hundred feet high, by two hundred yards in diameter at the base, and of great regularity of outline. It was made up entirely of stones, more or less rounded, and of every size, from one pound up to five hundred. No sound was heard when we reached it, except a low, rumbling noise, accompanied by a very slight tremulous motion. Anxious to examine it more closely, and to test the truth of the popular assertion that any marked disturbance near the volcanic vents is sure to bring on an eruption, we prepared to ascend. Fearing we might find the stones too much heated near the summit, to save my hands, I prepared myself with two staffs, as supports. The Doctor disdained such appliances, and started without them. The ascent was very laborious, the stones rolling away beneath our feet, and rattling down the sides. We however almost succeeded in reaching the summit, when the Doctor, who was a little in advance, suddenly recoiled with an exclamation of pain, having all at once reached a layer of stones so hot as to blister his hands at the first touch. We paused for a moment, and I was looking to my footing, when I was startled by an exclamation of terror from my companion, who gave simultaneously an almost superhuman leap down the side. At the same instant a strange roar almost deafened me; there seemed to be a whirl of the atmosphere, and a sinking of the mass upon which I was standing. Quick as thought I glanced upward; the heavens were black with stones, and a thousand lightnings flashed among them. All this was in an instant, and in the same instant I too was dashing down the side, reaching the bottom at the same moment with my companion, and just in time to escape the stones, which fell in rattling torrents where we had stood a moment before. I need not say that in spite of spiny cacti and rugged beds of lava, we were not long in putting a respectable and safe distance between us and the

flaming object of our curiosity. The eruption lasted for nearly an hour, interspersed with lulls, like long breathings. The noise was that of innumerable blast-furnaces in full operation, and the air was filled with projected and falling stones. The subsidence was almost as sudden as the outburst, and we waited several hours in vain for another eruption. Our guides assured us that a second attempt to ascend, or any marked disturbance on the slope, or in the vicinity, would be followed by an eruption, but we did not care to try the experiment.

From that period until I left Central America, I am not aware that there occurred more than one eruption, namely, on the occasion of the falling of the first considerable shower of rain, on, I think, the 27th of the month succeeding that in which the outbreak occurred. Nor have I learned that up to this time this promising young volcano has exhibited any additional active phenomena. I fear that its earlier efforts were too energetic, and that it has gone into a premature decline.

The discharges from this vent, consisting wholly of stones, may have been and probably were peculiar; for the volcanoes themselves, and the cones surrounding them, generally seem to have been made up of such stones, interspersed through large quantities of ashes and scoriaceous sand, alternating with beds of lava.

A few days before our visit, a deputation from the vaqueros and others living in the vicinity of Las Pilas had visited Leon, for the purpose of soliciting the Bishop to go to this place and baptize the prospective volcano, in order to keep it in moderation, and make it observe the proprieties of life. I believe a partial assent was obtained, and the city was full of rumors touching this novel ceremony, which I was exceedingly curious to witness. But its early relapse into quietude dispelled the fears of the people, and the proposed rite was never performed, much to my disappointment, as I intended

to stand as god-father, *compadre*, to the *Volcano de los Nortes Americanos!* This is an old practice, and the ceremony, it is said, was performed, early after the Conquest, on all the volcanoes in Nicaragua, with the exception of Momotombo, which is yet amongst the unsanctified. The old friars who started for its summit, to set up the cross there, were never heard of again.

Although believing that most of the volcanic cones have been formed in the manner above indicated, by gradual accumulations, yet the volcanoes which have shown the greatest energy are low and irregular, and devoid of anything remarkable in their appearance. Such is the Volcano of Coseguina, in Nicaragua, the eruption of which in 1835 was one of the most terrible on record.

On the morning of the 20th of January of that year, several loud explosions were heard for a radius of a hundred leagues around this volcano, followed by the rising of an inky black cloud above it, through which darted tongues of flame resembling lightning. This cloud gradually spread outward, obscuring the sun, and shedding over everything a yellow, sickly light, and at the same time depositing a fine sand, which rendered respiration difficult and painful. This continued for two days, the obscuration becoming more and more dense, the sand falling more thickly, and the explosions becoming louder and more frequent. On the third day the explosions attained their maximum, and the darkness became intense. Sand continued to fall, and people deserted their houses and sheltered themselves under tents of hide in the courts, fearing the roofs might be crushed beneath the weight. This sand fell several inches deep at Leon, more than one hundred miles distant. It fell in Jamaica, Vera Cruz, and Santa Fe de Bogota, over an area of one thousand five hundred miles in diameter. The noise of the explosions was heard nearly as far, and the Superintendent of Belize, eight hundred miles distant, mustered his troops, under the impres-

sion that there was a naval action off the harbor. All Nature seemed overawed; the birds deserted the air, and the wild beasts their fastnesses, crouching, terror-stricken and harmless, in the dwellings of men. The people for a hundred leagues groped, dumb with horror, amidst the thick darkness, bearing crosses on their shoulders and stones on their heads, in penitential abasement and dismay. Many believed the day of doom had come, and crowded with noiseless footsteps over a bed of ashes to the tottering churches, where, in the pauses of the explosions, the voices of the priests were heard in solemn invocation to Heaven. The strongest lights were invisible at the distance of a few feet; and, to heighten the terrors of the scene, occasional lightnings traversed the darkness, shedding a lurid glare over the earth. This continued for forty-three hours, when the shocks of earthquakes and the eruptions ceased, and a brisk wind springing up, the obscuration gradually passed away.

The air was literally filled with an almost impalpable powder, which entered the eyes, ears, and nostrils, and produced a sensation of suffocation, a gasping for breath. At first the doors and windows were closed, but without effect; the exclusion of air, joined to the intense heat, became intolerable. The only relief was found in throwing wetted cloths over their heads. The horses and mules suffered not less than the people; many died, and others were saved only by adopting the same precautions.

For some leagues around the volcano, the sand and ashes had fallen to the depth of several feet. Of course the operations of the volcano could only be known by the results. A crater had been opened, several miles in circumference, from which had flowed vast quantities of lava into the sea on one hand, and the Gulf of Fonseca on the other. The verdant sides of the mountain were now rough, burned, seamed, and covered with disrupted rocks and fields of lava. The quantity of matter ejected was incredible in amount. I

am informed by the captain of a vessel which passed along the coast a few days thereafter, that the sea for fifty leagues was covered with floating masses of pumice, and that he sailed for a whole day through it, without being able to distinguish but here and there an open space of water.

The appearance of this mountain is now desolate beyond description. Not a trace of life appears upon its parched sides. Here and there are openings emitting steam, small jets of smoke and sulphurous vapors, and in some places the ground is swampy from thermal springs. It is said that the discharge of ashes, sand, and lava was followed by a flow of water, and the story seems corroborated by the particular smoothness of some parts of the slope. The height of this mountain is not, I think, more than three thousand five hundred feet.

The anniversary of this eruption is celebrated in the most solemn manner in Nicaragua. I witnessed the ceremony in the church of La Merced, where, in common with all the foreign residents, I was invited by a circular letter as follows:

Leon Enero 20 de 1850.

Por imposicion de las sagradas manos de S. E. Yllma. el dignisímo Sr. Obispo Dr. D. Jorje de Viteri y Ungo, he recibido hoy el orden sacro del Presbiterado; y por su disposicion, subiré al augusto Altar del Eterno á celebrar por la primera vez el tremendo sacrificio, el dia 23 del corriente, *aniversario décimo quinto de la erupcion del volcan de Coseguina*, en la Yglesia de Ntra. Señora de las Mercedes, por cuya poderosa intercesion, salvamos en aquella vez de los peligros que nos amenazáron. Allí predicará el mismo Excmo. Sr., mi amado Prelado.

Tengo el honor de participarlo todo á U., suplicandole su interesante concurrencia, y firmandome con placer, su muy respetuoso seguro servidor y capellan Q. B. S. M.

Rafael Pablo Jerez.

TRANSLATION.

Leon, January 20, 1850.

By the imposition of the sacred hands of His Excellency the most illustrious and most dignified Bishop, Dr. Don Jorge de Viteri y Ungo, I

have this day been invested with the orders of priesthood; and by his direction, will ascend the august Altar of the Eternal, to celebrate for the first time the tremendous sacrifice of the fifteenth anniversary of the eruption of the volcano of Coseguina, on the 23rd inst., in the church of our Lady of Mercies, by whose powerful intercession we were then saved from the dangers which threatened us. There also will preach the same excellent Señor, my beloved prelate.

I have the honor to inform you of this, and to solicit your concurrence. With pleasure I subscribe myself your very respectful, faithful servant and chaplain,

Who kisses your hands,

RAFAEL PABLO JEREZ.

The ceremony was very impressive,[1] and the memory of the terrible event thus commemorated was evidently strong in the minds of those who had witnessed it, and who might be distinguished by their greater gravity and devotion.

It has been observed that any great eruption, like that

[1] Byam, an English traveller, makes the following statement, which is copied without any endorsement of its truth:—

"On the morning of the 23d the fall of ashes became more dense, and the natural grave of man seemed to be rising from the earth instead of being dug in it. The women, with their heads covered with wet linen, to obviate the smothering effect of the falling dust, again hurried to the churches with cries and lamentations, and tried to sing canticles to their favorite saints. As a last resort, every saint in the churches of Leon, without exception, lest he should be offended, was taken from his niche and placed in the open air,—I suppose to enable him to judge from experience of the state of affairs—but still the ashes fell!

"Towards night, however, a mighty wind sprung up from the north, and the inhabitants at last gained a view of the sun's setting rays, gilding their national volcanoes. Of course the cessation of the shower of ashes was attributed to the intercession of these saints, who doubtless wished to get under cover again, which opinion was strongly approved of by the priests, as they would certainly not be the losers by the many offerings; but during a general procession for thanks, which took place the next day, it was discovered that the paint which had been rather clumsily bestowed upon the Virgin's face had blistered from the heat of the numerous candles burned around it, and half Leon proclaimed that she had caught the small-pox during her residence in the city, and in consequence of her anger

above recorded, is often attended by similar phenomena in other and remote localities. Thus, a few weeks after the eruption of Coseguina, the whole of New Granada was convulsed; the subterranean thunder was heard simultaneously in Nicaragua, Popayan, Bogota, Santa Martha, Caraccas, Hayti, Curacoa, and Jamaica. These synchronous evidences of activity in subterranean forces is very well illustrated in the recent earthquakes in Venezuela, Peru, Chili, the Antilles, Central America, Mexico, and California. The centres of greatest violence seem to have been in Costa Rica, Venezuela, and Chili. In Costa Rica the places nearest the volcanoes of Orosi and Cartago suffered most; among these were the cities of San José and Heredia, and the town of Barba. Many churches and private dwellings were thrown down or injured. The shocks occurred on the 18th of March last (1851) at about 8 o'clock in the morning; on the Isthmus of Panama on the 15th of May; in Chile on the 2d of April. The amount of property destroyed in Valparaiso was estimated at a million and a half of dollars. In the island of Guadaloupe the earthquakes commenced on the 16th of May, and continued until the 18th; and in San Francisco they were felt on the 15th of the same month.[1]

The volcano nearest Leon is that of Telica, which is the

the infliction they had just suffered was imposed upon them. Innumerable were the candles burnt before the 'Queen of Heaven,' and many and valuable the offerings to her priests, for the sake of propitiation,"—*Wanderings*, p. 37.

[1] A number of severe earthquakes have happened within the last few years. One occurred in Guatemala in 1830, nearly if not quite as severe as that of 1773. In February, 1831, and September, 1839, severe shocks were felt in San Salvador, and in 1841 in Costa Rica. The last nearly destroyed the city of Cartago, which had previously suffered a similar catastrophe. May, 1844, was distinguished throughout Nicaragua by a series of earthquakes occurring at regular intervals, over a period of several days. The city of Nicaragua suffered much, and the waters of the lake were observed to rise and fall with the throes of the earth.

smallest of the group, being not more than three thousand feet high, but exceedingly regular in outline. It has recently been ascended by my friend Prof. JULIUS FRŒBEL, whose interesting account I subjoin:

"From Leon, I made an excursion to the volcanic cone of Telica, which is more easy of ascent than any other peak in the neighborhood. In fact, the road to the summit is more fatiguing than dangerous. I rode one evening to the village of Telica, which is two leagues distant from Leon. I mounted my horse the next morning at 4 o'clock, in company with a good guide, and well provided with water and provisions. At first by moonlight and afterwards in the morning twilight, we rode, slowly ascending, through a thick forest. The path gradually became more steep and rough. As the forests disappeared, savannas followed, which, where they had been recently swept by fire, were clothed with a fresh and tender green. Manifold trees and shrubs, some without leaves, but gay with blossoms, formed park-like groups in the broad mountain meadows. One of these small, elevated valleys was ravishingly beautiful. It was surrounded by the highest summits, whose sides are covered with grass, out of which shoot the single stems of the wine-palm, (*coyol*,) while a little grove of this and other trees, mixed with shrubbery, stood in the lake of grass, six feet deep, which filled the bottom. The coyol-palm furnishes, by tapping, a sweet, cooling, and healthy juice, which is sometimes drunk when fresh and sometimes when undergoing fermentation, under the name of *chicha-coyol*. The nuts which depend from the crown in immense clusters, are about the size of small apples. They are a favorite food of cattle, and are sometimes eaten by the natives; they furnish an oil, which is much finer than the cocoa oil, and is adapted to a variety of uses.

"At last, high above, the grass grows scattered among sharp blocks of lava, which make the road toilsome and dangerous. At the limit of shrubbery we left our horses and all our heavy equipments behind, and continued our journey on foot. In an hour we had reached the summit, and stood on the edge of a crater from two to three hundred feet deep. We lowered ourselves with a rope down a perpendicular wall of rock, from sixty to seventy feet deep, and then clambered toward the centre. The hot steam which here and there came from the damp and heated earth, and a great weakness which I felt in consequence of a violent fit of vomiting that seized me on the way, prevented me from penetrating into the lowest depths. There is little of interest to be seen there, how-

ever; for the crater is filled with fragments which have tumbled down from the side walls, so that, with the exception of some crystals of sulphur and sublimated salts, no substance is to be found which I had not already picked up on the side of the mountain. It is a mass of black, porous lava, faded to a reddish brown on the outside from the effects of the weather, and sprinkled with small crystals of glassy feldspar. On the outside, near the summit, it is frequently raised into oven-shaped curves, with a laminar division of the strata, but generally occurs in angular masses or flat cakes. The whole mountain, like all the cones of this region, has been built up by the masses hurled from its depths. In the crater I found a few small specimens of crystalline lime, and others of a remarkably hard variety of augite. Inside and deep down, there was a small bush, apparently a *vaccinium*, (whortleberry,) with panicles of beautiful white, hirsute, bell-shaped flowers, and some bunches of tasteless blackberries. On the upper edge of the crater I found an *orchidæ*, whose crimson spike of blossoms resembled some varieties of our German orchis. A small fir-tree stood rooted among the rocks near the summit; the other vegetation was grass and a few insignificant weeds.

"The view from the summit is magnificent. Near at hand is the whole group of volcanoes, from Momotombo to Viejo. Behind the former of these flashes the Lake of Managua, a great part of which is visible. Over and beyond it, the landscape is lost in the haze of distance. On the other hand, the eye wanders wide over the uncertain horizon of the Pacific, against which are traced, in sharp outline, the winding bays and headlands of the coast. You can trace its irregular line from the neighborhood of Realejo far to the south-east, and overlook the isthmus between the Ocean and Lake Managua. To the north you have the long mountain chain which stretches from the San Juan River, along the north-eastern shores of Lakes Nicaragua and Managua, through the districts of Chontales, Matagalpa and New Segovia, to the States of Honduras and San Salvador. At the foot of this chain, which is completely separated from the volcanic group of Momotombo, Telica, and Viejo, rise a number of conical hills, some of them in the plain which extends from the north-western extremity of Lake Managua behind the volcanoes, toward the Gulf of Fonseca. The whole view is a splendid picture of plain and mountain, covered with brilliant vegetation as far as the eye can reach, the rich, cultivated plantations being scarcely discernible in the vast space. Here and there the shimmer of a sheet of water enlivens the universal green.

"I reached the village in time to return to Leon the same evening. A few days previously I had visited two sulphur springs at the foot of this

mountain—called respectively San Jacinto and Tisate. At the former place, a hot, insipid, reddish-brown water, whose steam had an acrid, sulphurous flavor, boils up from the soil in numberless small holes. Through the agency of various metallic salts and oxides, the hot, soft clay exhibits all shades of white, yellow, brown, red, green, blue and black, while the soil is crusted with sublimated sulphur and freed salts of different kinds. At the latter place, a sort of ashy gray, boiling slime, or rather clay-broth, is hurled into the air from a small crater. Near it a hill has been formed of the same variegated earths and salts as are seen at San Jacinto. These are two genuine chemical laboratories, where a number of processes are going on. In the clayey slime, penetrated with hot steam, sulphuric acids and gases, I found thousands of shining sulphur pyrites, which, according to all appearances, were constantly forming."

The volcano of El Viejo was ascended in 1838, by Capt. Belcher, of the British Navy, who made its absolute height 5562 feet; but according to my own admeasurements it is just 6000 feet. As the cone of El Viejo rises sheer from the plain, it probably appears much higher than the more elevated peak of Cartago, which rises from an elevated mountain range. Capt. Belcher thus describes his ascent:

"At four P. M., having procured guides, we proceeded to the foot of the mountain, where we designed sleeping. Our journey lay partly through the woods, where the guides halted for a draught of the fermented juice of the palm, which they had prepared in their previous visits, and others were now tapped, in readiness for our return. After scrambling through much loose lava-rock, which I was surprised to see the animals attempt, as it was entirely hidden by long grass, we reached our sleeping station at seven o'clock, when, having picked out the softest stone bed, and tethered our animals, we made the most of our time in the way of sleeping.

"At dawn on the 10th (of February), we remounted our animals, and passed still more difficult ground, until half-past six, when we reached the lower line of the "Pine range," that tree observing a distinct line throughout all these mountain ranges. It became, therefore, a matter of interest to ascertain this elevation, which by barometric data is 3000 feet above the sea level. Temperature at this time (before sunrise) 66° of Fahrenheit.

"Having tethered our beasts, we now commenced our ascent *à pied*. The first efforts, owing to the long grass, were fatiguing, and the mate was

hors du combat before we reached half way. As we ascended, the grass disappeared, the breeze freshened, and spirits rose, and at nine we had turned the lip of the crater. Here I was surprised by a peak presenting itself on the opposite side of the crater, and apparently inaccessible. I nevertheless descended to the edge of the inner cone, from whence I thought I discovered a narrow pass; but it was only by dint of perseverance and determination that we could persuade the guides to re-shoulder the instruments and go ahead. Difficulties vanished as we proceeded, and we found a path beaten by the wild bullocks, which led to the very peak. Here I obtained the requisite observations for determining the position and height. The range of the temperature here during our stay (from half past ten until half past one) was from 77° to 80° Fahrenheit.

"I was unfortunate in the day; it blew freshly (although calm at the base), was hazy, and excepting high peaks and headlands, I lost the most interesting minutiæ. The volcano now consists of three craters. The outer one is about fifteen hundred feet in diameter, having the peak, or highest lip, on the western edge. Within, it is precipitous, for the depth of about one hundred and fifty feet. From the inner base, at that depth, rises the second inner volcano, to the height of about eighty feet, having within it still another cone. Around the western base of the first or inner, the cliffs rise precipitously, with luxuriant pines growing from the vertical face. Here vapors arise from many points, and doubtless to this cause they are indebted for their peculiarly healthy and vigorous condition. No minerals worthy of carriage were discovered. We had been informed that sulphur was abundant, but those who descended to look for it found none. Here there was a hot spring, the temperature of which exceeded the range of my thermometers, doubtless coming up to the boiling point. The view was very beautiful; the map of the country was at my feet; even the main features of the Lake of Managua were visible. *Mem.* People who ascend high mountains, with weak heads and weaker stomachs, should reserve spirits for cases of necessity only—as medicine!"[1]

Besides the hot springs mentioned by Capt. Belcher, at the summit of El Viejo, there are also orifices emitting rills of smoke, which, under favorable states of the atmosphere, may be seen from Leon. When the pirate Dampier was on this coast, this volcano exhibited unmistakable signs of life;

[1] "Voyage Round the World," vol. i. p. 162.

for this old voyager states expressly that it was an "exceedingly high mountain, smoking all day, and sending out flames at night."[1]

The great plain of Leon, at its highest part, is elevated about two hundred feet above the sea; yet in the vicinity of the range of volcanoes which traverses it, in digging wells, beds of lava, fifteen feet thick, have been found, at the depth of seventy-five Spanish varas, or about two hundred and ten feet, and this at a point not the highest of the plain, but according to my calculations only one hundred and thirty feet above the ocean. Unless there is some great error in these data, and I can discover of none, they would seem to prove that there has been a subsidence of the plain since the almost infinitely remote period when the stream of lava flowed upwards from the depths of the earth. I may mention that in the vicinity of the volcanoes, water is scarce, and can only be obtained by digging to great depths. The particular well to which I refer is at the cattle estate *de las Palmas*, eighteen miles north-east of Leon, and is upward of three hundred feet in depth, the water pure, with no saline materials in solution.

Much might be said on the phenomena of earthquakes as they occur in this country. The shocks seem to be of two classes; the perpendicular, which are felt only in the vicinity of volcanoes, and the horizontal, which reach over wide tracts of country. The latter are very unequal; in some places being violent, and in others, nearer their assumed source, comparatively slight. The undulating movement seems to be only a modification of the horizontal or vibratory. Sometimes these motions are all combined, or rather succeed each other with great rapidity. Such was the case with the earthquake of the 27th of October, 1850, which I experienced, and of which I can speak authoritatively. It occurred at

[1] "Voyage Round the World," vol. i. p. 119.

about one o'clock in the morning. I was aroused from sleep by a strong undulatory motion, which was sufficiently violent to move my bed several inches backward and forth on the rough paved floor, and to throw down books and other articles which had been placed on my table. The tiles of the roof were also rattled together violently, and the beams and rafters creaked like the timbers of a deeply-laden vessel in a heavy sea. The people all rushed from their houses in the greatest alarm, and commenced praying in loud tones. The domestic animals seemed to share the general consternation; the horses struggled as if to loose themselves, and the dogs commenced a simultaneous barking. This undulatory motion lasted nearly a minute, steadily increasing in violence, until suddenly it changed into a rapid vibratory or horizontal motion, which rendered it difficult to stand upright. This lasted about thirty seconds, and was followed as suddenly by a vertical movement, or a series of shocks, such as one would experience in being rapidly let down a flight of steps, then declined in violence, but nevertheless seemed to stop abruptly. The whole lasted about two minutes, and can be compared to nothing except the rapid movement of a large and loaded railroad car over a bad track, in which there are undulations, horizontal irregularities, and breaks.

No considerable damage was done. Some old walls were thrown down, but in various places in the country I afterwards observed that rocks had been detached and portions of cliffs broken off by the shocks. The thick adobe walls of my house were cracked in several places from top to bottom. Many other buildings suffered in like manner. The motion which seemed most dangerous to me was that which I have described as *horizontal*, in which the earth seemed to slide away from beneath my feet.

The night was clear moonlight, and it was very still; not a breath of air seemed stirring. The orange trees in my

courtyard, during the continuance of the undulations, swayed regularly to and fro; but when the other movements followed, they had an unsteady or tremulous motion. The water in my well, which was very deep, seemed also much agitated. The direction of the undulations was from north to south, and they were felt throughout the entire State of Nicaragua, and in Honduras and San Salvador, and even perhaps beyond these limits.

I learned from old residents, that, as compared with the others which have occurred within the last quarter of a century, this earthquake ranked as about seven, the maximum being ten.

All observers here concur in saying that, while earthquakes are common at all times of the year, they are much more numerous and violent at the entrance and close of the two seasons, the wet and the dry; that is, about the last of October and the first of November, and the last of April and the first of May. They are observed as particularly numerous and strong after the heavy rains, at the close of the wet season in October. It is also observed that a general quiet seems to prevail, for a period, both before and after their occurrence.[1]

[1] Oviedo observes respecting the earthquakes of the country, that "they are frequent at the time of storms,—though to tell the truth, rain rarely falls. These shocks," he adds, "are not light, but are real earthquakes, very severe and very long. During my stay in this city, I have seen some violent ones, so much so as to compel us to abandon the houses, through fear of being crushed to death beneath them, and to take refuge in the streets and squares. I have counted upwards of sixty shocks within twenty-four hours, and that for several days. During the shocks the lightning struck and inflamed houses. All this I saw at Leon, but certainly these earthquakes cannot be compared with those of the city of Pozzuoli, which I saw completely overthrown by an earthquake, of the same kind with those at Leon. If this last mentioned city had been built of stone, like those of Spain, it would soon have been destroyed, with great loss of lives."

It is difficult to discover the connection between these different phenomena, but there seems to be a concurrence as to the facts here stated. It is certainly true, that the only shocks which I have felt were in the periods indicated, and it is also certain that nearly all occur in the night. Perhaps, amidst the occupations and distractions of the day, the lesser ones pass unobserved.

There are many striking features in the topography of Central America, which seem entirely due to volcanic agency. Those which have more particularly attracted my attention, are what are popularly denominated extinct craters, now partially filled with water, forming lakes without outlets or apparent sources of supply, save the rains. Some of these occur on the mountain and hill ranges, and are surrounded by evidences of having been volcanic vents. But this is not always the case. The Lake of Masaya, which I have already described, may be taken as an example. It is not less than eight or ten miles in circumference, and is not far from one thousand feet, perhaps more, below the general level of the country. The sides are sheer precipices of trachytic rocks, splintered and blistered, and exhibiting every indication of having been exposed to the intensest heat. Yet, if these were true craters, where are the lava, ashes, and other materials which they have ejected? There are certainly none in their vicinity, which have emanated from them, no traces of lava streams surrounding them, nor are their edges elevated above the general level. Upon one side of the particular one which I have mentioned, rises the extinct volcano of Masaya or Nindiri, with its proper crater, whence have flowed vast quantities of lava, part of which, falling over the precipitous walls of the lake, have quite filled it upon that side. Some of the lakes are more or less impregnated with saline materials, but others are perfectly fresh, and abound in fish. The burned and blistered walls indicate,

it appears to me, that they have not been caused by the subsidence, or the falling in of the earth.

Oviedo makes special mention of the range of volcanoes to which I have so often alluded, which he calls by the aboriginal name, "Marabios." At the time of his visit, some of them were active, or rather sent out large quantities of smoke. These were probably Santa Clara and Telica, which appear to have been most recently in a state of eruption. He says, "About the centre of this chain three peaks can be distinguished, rising one behind the other. They are very steep on the north side, and descend gradually to the plain on the southern. This country is very fertile; and as the east winds reign here continually, the western portion is always covered with smoke, proceeding from these three mountains, the most elevated of the chain, and five or six leagues in circumference. The volcano the nearest to the city of Leon (Telica) is four or five leagues off. It sometimes happens, when the north wind blows strong, that the smoke, instead of escaping on the western side, as usual, takes a southern course; then it scorches and withers the maize fields and other productions of the soil, and causes great mischief in the villages, which are numerous. The ground suffers to such a degree from the heat, that it remains arid for four or five years after."

I have elsewhere introduced Oviedo's account of his visit to the volcano of Masaya. In another part of his MS., the chronicler gives a summary of the relation of the Fray Blas de Castillo, who, in 1834, descended into the crater of this volcano. It seems that in his narrative the Fray referred to the Historian in such a manner as to excite his anger, and in consequence he indulges in several pungent little episodes in the resumé, of which the following is a very fair example: "It is a hard matter," observes Oviedo, "to contradict all the falsehoods diffused through the world; and even if suc-

cessful in so doing, it is a matter of greater difficulty to undeceive those who have heard them. Now if the Fray Blas de Castillo had thought that his account would one day fall into my hands, he would not have said that I, Gonzales Hernandez de Oviedo y Valdez, Chronicler General of the Indies, had asked permission of his Majesty to place the volcano of Masaya on my coat of arms, because I had happened to visit it. I have never made such a request; I have no desire to carry such arms; nor do I think any Christian would approve of it; the Fray has lied!"[1]

The descent of the Fray Blas was conducted with great secrecy, and under the full belief that the molten matter seen at the bottom of the crater was gold or silver. "This matter," he says, "resembles a red sea, and its commotions make as much noise as do the waves of the ocean when they dash against the rocks. This sea looks like the metal of which bells are made, or sulphur or gold, in a state of fusion, except that it is covered with a black scum, two or three fathoms thick. Were it not for this mass of scum, or scoriæ, the fire would throw out such an ardor and lustre that it would be impossible to remain near it, or look upon it. Sometimes it breaks apart in certain places, and then one can perceive the matter, red and brilliant as the light of heaven. In the midst constantly rise two large masses of melted metal, four or five fathoms across, which are con-

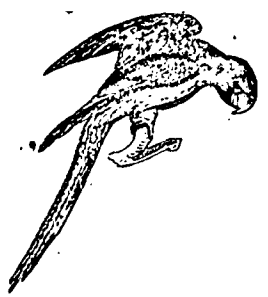
[1] Although Oviedo denies so indignantly that he received the volcano of Masaya as a device on his coat of arms, yet, having resided thirty years under the tropics, the Emperor Charles V. gave him the four beautiful stars of the Southern Cross as amorial bearings. This method of rewarding men was common in the active period following the Discovery. Thus Columbus received, as the chronicler words it "para sublimarlo," to honor him, the first map of America,—a range of islands in front of a Gulf: Sebastian de Elcano, the first circumnavigator of the globe, a globe with the inscription, "Primus circumdedisti me:" and Diego de Ordaz, who first ascended the volcano of Orizaba, a drawing of that high and conical mountain.

stantly free from the scum, and from which the liquid metal leaps forth on every side. The sound of these melted streams, dashing amongst the rocks, is like that of artillery battering the walls of a city. The rocks around this sea of metal are black to the height of seven or eight fathoms, which proves that the liquid matter sometimes rises to that distance. Upon the north-eastern side of the crater is the opening of a cavern, very deep, and as wide as the range of an arquebus. A stream of burning fluid flows into this cavern, which seems to be the outlet of the crater. It runs for a few moments, stops, then commences again, and so on constantly. There comes forth from this cavern a thick smoke, greater than rises from the whole lake, which diffuses on all sides a very strong odor. There comes forth also, a heat and brilliancy which cannot be described. During the night the summit of the mountain is perfectly illuminated, as are also the clouds, which seem to form a kind of *tiara* above it, which may be seen eighteen or twenty leagues on the land, and upwards of thirty at sea. The darker the night the more brilliant the volcano. It is worthy of remark, that neither above nor below can the least flame be seen, except when a stone or arrow is thrown into the crater, which burns like a candle.

"During rains and tempests, the volcano is most active; for when the storm reaches its height, it makes so many movements that one might say it was a living thing. The heat is so great that the rain is turned into vapor before reaching the bottom of the crater, and entirely obscures it. Both Indians and Spaniards affirm, that since the Conquest, during a very rainy year, the burning metal rose to the top of the crater, and that the heat was then so great that everything was burnt for a league around. Such a quantity of burning vapor came from it, that the trees and plants were dried up for more than two leagues. Indeed, one cannot behold the volcano without fear, admiration, and repentance

of his sins; for it can be surpassed only by the eternal fire. Some confessors have imposed no other penance than to visit this volcano."

Oviedo adds, that, although no animals were to be found on the volcano or its slopes, paroquets abounded, both on the summit of the mountain and within the crater, at the time the volcano was still active. The Fray Blas made two descents into the crater, and by means of a chain lowered an iron bucket into the molten mass of lava. He was much disappointed in procuring only a mass of gray pumice, when he had expected to find pure silver or gold. The second descent was performed in the presence of the Governor, who afterwards forbade any similar enterprises. The fires are now cold in the crater, and the "Hell of Masaya" is extinguished.



THE PAROQUET.

CHAPTER XX.

CHRISTMAS—NACIMIENTOS—THE CATHEDRAL ON CHRISTMAS EVE—MIDNIGHT CEREMONIES—AN ALARM—ATTEMPT AT REVOLUTION—FIGHT IN THE PLAZA—TRIUMPH OF ORDER—THE DEAD—MELANCHOLY SCENES—A SCHEME OF FEDERATION.

CHRISTMAS is celebrated with much ceremony in all Catholic countries; and upon my return to Leon, I found the Señoras of the city busily engaged in preparing for it. I was delighted to learn that we were to have something a little different from the eternal *bombas* and interminable processions. In nearly every house, a room was set apart for a representation of the *nacimiento*, or birth, in which the taste of the mistresses was variously exhibited. When these are arranged, on the evening before Christmas, they are thrown open to inspection, and for a week the principal business of the women and children is to go from house to house, to see the *nacimientos*, criticise, and institute comparisons. I saw but two, at the houses respectively of Gen. Muñoz, and my friend Col. Zapata. In each case the representation filled an entire half of a large room. Two or three young palms were set on each side of the apartment, so as to embower a kind of grotto, covered all over with brilliant shells and stones, and draped with vines and flowers. Within this grotto was a miniature figure of the Virgin and the Infant Jesus, surrounded by the kneeling figures of the Magi, Saint Joseph, "Nuestra Señor San Joaquin," and "Nuestra Señora Santa Ana," the husband of Mary, and the accredited grandfather and grandmother of the holy babe.

The room was darkened, and the effect very beautiful; for the whole was brilliantly illuminated by concealed candles, and the figures multiplied, and the perspective rendered almost interminable by small, but artfully arranged mirrors. A railing prevented any one from approaching so near as to weaken the effect, or discover the arrangement. At this time everybody, whatever his condition, is allowed to enter, unquestioned, into every house which has its nacimiento; and it was a singular spectacle to witness brawny Indians, naked children, and gayly-dressed Señoras grouped together, and gazing in decorous silence upon a spectacle so closely interwoven with their traditions, and suggestive of the most cherished doctrines of their church. Señora Zapata carried off the palm of honor; her nacimiento was not more tastefully nor more expensively got up than the others; but she had put a music-box, with a boy to wind it up, behind the scenes, which regularly tinkled through its round of tunes, commencing with the "Marsellaise," and ending with "A Life on the Ocean Wave." This was unanimously voted to be about "the thing," and the little Indians of Subtiaba thronged the Colonel's doors from early dawn to midnight, unwearied listeners to the unseen musician, and no doubt believing that the melodies were produced by the extraordinary Magi who knelt so stiffly and grim around the Virgin Mother. The exhibition of the nacimiento continues for nine days, and the period is therefore sometimes called a *Novena*.

But the crowning features of Christmas were the ceremonies on the eve of that day, in the Cathedral. Here, back of the great altar, was a representation of the adoration of the Magi on a grand scale. Large trees bent above the stable occupied by the Holy Family, and the figures introduced were nearly as large as life. Heavy curtains hung from the ceiling upon either hand, behind which strong lights threw a flood of radiance upon the scene, while the rest of the great temple was shrouded in darkness, or but dimly revealed

by the reflected light, and by the lamps of the musicians in the choir, and of the chanting priests in the nave beneath it. It was hardly dark before the people began to gather from all parts of the city, including hundreds who had come from the neighboring villages. When I reached the Cathedral, the entire central aisle was filled with kneeling women, their heads shrouded in their rebosos, or covered with mantillas, gazing in silence upon the holy group, while the music of the choir and the monotonous chants of the priests seemed to be almost lost amongst the columns and arches, in low, wandering echoes. As the night advanced, the devotional feelings of the silent multitude became roused, a hum of prayer filled the Cathedral, and as midnight approached, many of the women seemed lost in wild, religious fervor; the notes of the musicians, and the voices of the priests, before subdued, now rose high and exultant; and when the clock announced midnight, all the bells of the city struck up a joyful chime, and the vast auditory rising to its feet, joined in the triumphant refrain, "Jubilate! Christ is born!" A procession of priests advanced, and the Virgin and Son were reverently placed upon a crimson cushion, and beneath a silken canopy, supported by rods of silver, they were carried out into the plaza, where the military, with arms presented, heads uncovered, and bending on one knee, paid their adoration, while the procession moved slowly around the square, repeating, "Hosannah! hosannah! Christ is born!" How late the ceremonies continued I know not, for I went home and to bed, not a little impressed by the scene which I had witnessed.

But little more than a week after this, I was witness of a widely different scene in the same plaza. It was a quiet and exceeding beautiful afternoon. An American friend from Honduras had dined with me, and we were discussing a luscious papaya, preparatory to the afternoon siesta in the hammocks under the corridor, when we heard a sudden firing

in the direction of the plaza. The sound of the discharges appeared to me to be singularly distinct and emphatic, but supposing that some fiesta was in progress, with the usual *bomba* accompaniment, I made no remark. The discharges continued, and became more general, and shortly after Ben entered the room hurriedly, and touching his hat said, "Sir, I think there's a revolution!"

"Oh, no, Ben, it is only some fiesta."

"But, sir, the spent balls have fallen in the court!"

I had no time to reply, before the alarm, "Un asalto de las armas!" was raised in the streets, and the next moment a crowd of women and children, terror depicted in every face, rushed through the open *zaguan*, and along the corridors. These were followed by a confused mass, bare-headed, and in the greatest disorder, which came pouring over the walls into my courtyard. They all crowded around me for protection. Amongst them were a dozen young men, who should have taken their arms, and rallied to the aid of the authorities, but who stood here pale and craven. My predominant feeling towards these was anger and contempt; and I directed Ben to raise the United States flag, and stationed my American friend with a drawn sword at the door, with orders to admit all women, children, and old men, but not to allow a single able-bodied man to enter. While this was going on, the firing continued, and women, with trunks, boxes, and bundles, containing their valuables, thronged into my house for safety, filling the rooms and corridors, and huddling in groups in the courtyard. Some prayed, and others ran wildly here and there in quest of their children, or husbands, or brothers, wringing their hands, and appealing to me to save them.

The whole affair was a surprise, and comprehending how important to the country was interior quiet at this moment, I instantly determined to encounter all risks, and endeavor to put a stop to the outbreak before it should proceed to gene-

ral hostilities. Accompanied by Ben, I mounted my horse and started for the plaza. The streets were filled with the flying, terrified inhabitants, who, in reply to every question, only ejaculated, "Un asalto de las armas!" and pointed hopelessly in the direction of the plaza. At the first corner I met Dr. Clark returning from visiting a patient in the suburbs, and tossing him a pistol, he joined us. At that moment, the President of the State, accompanied by his secretary, dashed past us towards the seat of the commotion. We followed; but the firing now slackened, and just as we reached the plaza, ceased altogether. The smoke rose a little as we entered, and I was rejoiced to see the erect form of General Muñóz, at the head of a column of veterans, advancing with fixed bayonets towards the principal cuartel. The next moment he commanded a halt, and his men deployed into line. He strode down the ranks, leading off in the shout, "Viva el Gobierno Supreme! Mueran á los enemigos del orden!" in which the men joined in a half frantic tone of exultation.

The soldiers now caught sight of me, and spontaneously commenced cheering for the United States; the Bishop, who had made his appearance on the balcony of his house, joining in the shouts. The General advanced, and shaking my hand, said rapidly, all was over and all was well, and then, with the promptitude of a man equal to every emergency, detached the various divisions of his men to the more important points in the city. The soldiers defiled past, and at the head of a detachment, his eyes flashing with excitement, and every movement indicating the energy of his character, was the negro officer to whom I have elsewhere referred. I observed that his sword was dripping with blood.

The movement of the soldiers disclosed the front of the general cuartel, and exposed a spectacle such as I hope never again to see. Beneath the archway, still clutching

their weapons, were the bodies of two men, who seemed to have been killed in endeavoring to force an entrance; while a little in front, his garments saturated with blood, was the body of a well-dressed man, over whom a woman was kneeling. Her hands were clasped upon his shoulders, and she was gazing with an expression of unutterable anguish into his fixed, cold eyes. I rode nearer, and recognized in the person of the dead man my friend Don José Maria Morales, Magistrate of the Supreme Court of Justice, who, at the first alarm, had rushed to the support of the Government, and had fallen a victim to his zeal. The woman was his sister, who seeing him engaged, regardless of all danger, had penetrated the array of combatants, to his side. But it was too late; he could only ejaculate "mi hermana!" my sister, and died in her arms. The spectacle was most affecting; and the tears glistened in the eyes of the rude men who stood around the living and the dead.

I turned from this sad spectacle, and then observed, drawn up in front of the Cathedral, a body of some two hundred citizens, who, at the instant the commotion was known, had repaired, arms in hand, to the plaza. This was the first time they had done so for years, and it afforded the best evidence of the spirit which hope had infused into the hitherto despondent people of the country. It showed that they were now determined to maintain public order, and instead of flying to the fields upon the first symptoms of disturbance, to stand by their families and property, and defend their rights and their homes.

When I reached my house, I found that the crowd of refugees had already nearly dispersed. They were used to these things; revolutions with them were like thunder storms, here one moment, gone the next. My rooms nevertheless were still encumbered with valuables, and during the rest of the afternoon, in anticipation of every contingency, packages of papers and of money continued to come in. I

will venture to say, more than a hundred thousand dollars in gold was brought to my room, within the space of two hours, and chiefly by persons who were not suspected of having an extra medio in the world. Experience had taught them the necessity of keeping a sum of ready money at hand, in event of revolution; and also of keeping it so completely concealed, as not to excite a suspicion of their possessing it. I placed it all within a large chest, where most of it remained for two or three months, until all symptoms of disorder had passed away.

The city was full of rumors concerning the *escaramuza*, and it was not until late in the evening, when I was called upon by Señor Buitrago, Secretary of War, that I learned the facts in the case. It proved that the assault was made by a party of disaffected men belonging to the Barrio of the Laberinto, in which is concentrated the worst part of the population of the city, under the lead of two men of notorious character, who had both been killed, and whose bodies I had seen beneath the archway of the cuartel. Their plans had been matured with the profoundest secrecy, and evidently by men moving in a different sphere of life, and having the control of considerable ready money. The time and mode of the attack had been well chosen. During the festivals of Christmas and the New Year, a large number of cane booths had been erected in the plaza; and the conspirators, half a dozen at a time, had entered the square, and dispersed themselves amongst these booths, concealing their arms beneath their clothes. In this manner several hundreds had come in unsuspected. The point of attack was the Cuartel General, in which the arms of the State are deposited, and at the entrance of which only a half dozen men were on guard; the rest of the little garrison, at this time of the day, being occupied with their dinner. A few of the leading facciosos carelessly advanced in front of the building, as if to pass it, and then make a sudden rush upon the little guard, with the

view of disarming them, and taking the rest by surprise. The movement was made, and in an instant the conspirators in the booths advanced from their concealment, shouting, "Down with the Government!" The little guard at the gate was overpowered, and had it not been for the negro officer Clemente Rodriguez, it is likely the cuartel would have been captured. He was stationed at the opposite side of the square, at the cabildo, with a picquet guard of thirty men. Seeing the commotion, and supposing there was a revolt among the men of the principal cuartel, he ordered his guard to fire upon the confused mass which had collected in front of it. His example was followed by the guard at the Government House and the Cathedral. Distracted by this unexpected demonstration in their rear, the facciosos hesitated, affording time for the garrison to recover their arms. This was the critical moment, and Clemente, charging with fixed bayonets, decided the struggle, killing the leader of the insurgents with his own hands. In a few minutes the General, at the head of the company stationed at the Church of the Mercedes, reached the plaza. But the facciosos were all gone, no one knew where. They had mingled with the populace, the instant they saw that failure was inevitable, and no doubt hurrahed as loudly for the Government five minutes thereafter, as if they had always been its warmest supporters.

The vigilance of the authorities was again roused; and the city, for a month, wore something of the aspect which it bore upon our arrival. A number of arrests were made, but the details and instigators of the plot were never discovered. There were some facts disclosed, however, which would hardly be credited in the United States, where foreign intrigue never attempts the direct subversion of the government, and which I therefore pass over in silence.

Two days after this event, the body of Señor Morales was buried, with striking and unaffected demonstrations of sorrow

The corpse was followed to the grave by all the officers of the garrison, and minute guns were fired from the plaza during the burial. Scarcely a week elapsed, before the broken-hearted sister, prostrated by the catastrophe of her brother's death, was laid beside him in the Church of La Merced. The negro officer, Rodriguez, for his decision and bravery, was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

During the month of November, the Commissioners of Honduras, San Salvador, and Nicaragua had been in session, in the city of Leon, and had agreed upon the basis of a union of these States, the terms of which were promulgated about this period, for the first time. The arrangement looked to an immediate or speedy consolidation, for the purpose of conducting the foreign relations of the country, and to an early union on the plan of a federation, leaving it optional with the States of Guatemala and Costa Rica to accede to the compact. This policy was opposed by the old aristocratic or monarchical faction, or rather the remnants of it; and they, it is believed, were at the bottom of the disturbances to which I have referred. In Honduras, in the month following, they attempted a revolution, with the view of preventing the contemplated union; and although they there met with better success at the outset than in Nicaragua, they signally failed in the end, notwithstanding that they had the countenance and support of the British officials in the country; who, at this time, both in Costa Rica and in Guatemala, by publications and otherwise, not only denounced the whole plan of federation, and what they called the "American Policy," but threatened to break it down, whenever its organization should be attempted.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE "PASEO AL MAR"—PREPARATIONS FOR THE ANNUAL VISIT TO THE SEA—THE MIGRATION—IMPROMPTU DWELLINGS—INDIAN POTTERS—THE SALINES—THE ENCAMPMENT—FIRST IMPRESSIONS—CONTRABANDA—OLD FRIENDS—THE CAMP BY MOONLIGHT—PRACTICAL JOKES—A BRIEF ALARM—DANCE ON THE SHORE—UN JUEGO—LODGINGS, CHEAP AND ROMANTIC—AN OCEAN LULLABY—MORNING—SEA BATHING—ROUTINE OF THE PASEO—DIVERTISEMENTS—RETURN TO LEON.

AMONGST the amusements of the people of Nicaragua, or rather of those residing on the Plain of Leon, I ought perhaps to number "El Paseo al Mar," or annual visit to the Pacific. The fashionables of our cities flock, during "the season," to Saratoga or Newport, but those of Leon go to the sea. And although the Paseo is a different thing from a season at the Springs, yet it requires an equal amount of preparation, and is talked about, both before and after, in very much the same strain and quite as abundantly. It is the period for flirtations, and general and special love-making,—in short, it is the festival of St. Cupid, whose devotees, the world over, seem more earnest and constant than those of any canonized saint in the calendar.

I had heard various allusions to the Paseo al Mar, during the rainy season, but they were not the most intelligible. When the dry season set in, however, they became more frequent and distinct, and by the middle of January the subject of the Paseo became the absorbing topic of conversation. The half naked muchachos in the streets seemed inspirited

with the knowledge of its near approach; and even my venerable cook began a series of diplomatic advances to ascertain whether it was my intention "to do in Rome as the Romans do," and join in the general migration. The inquiry was made directly by a number of the Señoras, and the wife of one of my official friends, whose position enabled her to trench a little on conventional restrictions, plumply invited me to join her party. And yet the Paseo was not to come off until the moon of March, two months in the future.

At that time the dry season begins really to be felt; the crops are gathered, the rank vegetation is suspended, the dews are comparatively light, the sky is serene and cloudless, storms are unknown, and the moon rules at night with unwonted brightness and beauty. The dust in the cities becomes annoying, and trade languishes. It is just the season for mental relaxation and physical enjoyment. At that time too, the salt marshes near the sea become dry, and the mosquitos defunct. In short, the conditions for a pleasant Paseo are then perfected.

The preliminary arrangements are made during the week preceding the first quarter of the new moon. At that time a general movement of carts and servants takes place in the direction of the sea, and the Government despatches an officer and a guard to superintend the pitching of the annual camp upon the beach, or rather upon the forest-covered sand-ridge which fringes the shore. Each family, instead of securing rooms at the "Ocean House" or a cottage on the "Drive," builds a temporary cane hut, lightly thatched with palm-leaves, and floored with petates or mats. The whole is wickered together with vines, or woven together basket-wise, and partitioned in the same way, or by means of colored curtains of cotton cloth. This constitutes the penetralia, and is sacred to the "bello sexo" and the babies. The more luxurious ladies bring down their neatly-curtained beds, and make no mean show of elegance in the interior arrange-

ment of their impromptu dwellings. Outside, and something after the fashion of their permanent residences, is a kind of broad and open shed, which bears a very distant relation to the corridor. Here hammocks are swung, here the families dine, the ladies receive visitors, and the men sleep. It is the grand sala, the comedor, and the dormitório para los hombres.

The establishments here described pertain only to the wealthier visitors, the representatives of the upper classes. There is every intermediate variety, down to those of the mozo and his wife, who spread their blankets at the foot of a tree, and weave a little bower of branches above them,—an affair of ten or a dozen minutes. And there are yet others who disdain even this exertion, and nestle in the loose, dry sand,—a cheap practice which I should straightway recommend, were it not for anticipating my story.

"The ides of March," it was unanimously voted by impatient Señoritas, were a long time in coming, and great were the rejoicings on the eventful evening when the crescent moon—auspicious omen!—revealed its delicate horn when the sun went down in the west. A day or two after, the Paseo commenced in earnest; horses, mules, and carts, were all put in requisition, and when I took my evening ride, I observed that our favorite balconies were nearly every one empty. There were a few which yet retained their fair occupants, but the silvery, half-apologetical "mañana,"—"tomorrow," which answered our salutations, explained that these too would soon flit after their companions.

Business intervened to keep me in the city, which, deserted by full half of its population, now looked dull and desolate, and it was not until the fourth day, that I could arrange to take my share in the "Paseo." It was five leagues to the sea, and we waited until nearly sunset before starting. Through Subtiaba,—also half deserted, for the Paseo is the perpetuation of a semi-religious, Indian custom,—

along the pleasant stream which skirts it, winding now between high hedge-rows, among the tall forest-trees, or spurring across the open "*jicorals*," yellow from the drought, here passing a creaking cart, enveloped in a cloud of dust, filled with women and children, or with fruits and vegetables, and anon overtaking a party of caballeros, each with a gaily-dressed girl mounted on the saddle before him, with a reboso thrown loosely over her head and a lighted *puro* in her mouth, which, as we gallop past she removes for an instant, to cheer "al mar! al mar!" to the sea! to the sea!—thus on, on, until rising a swell of open land, we look over a league of flat country, shrouded in forest, out upon the expanse of the Pacific! The sun has gone down, the evening star trembles on the verge of the horizon, and the young moon struggles with the twilight, high and clear in the empyrean. A mile farther, and we reach a hollow, at the bottom of which is a stream, and from it comes a confused sound of many voices, wild laughter, and the echo of obstreperous songs. We involuntarily stop our horses, and look down upon a crowd of men and animals, drinking at the stream or struggling to approach it,—the whole swaying and incongruous mass but half revealed by the ruddy light of large fires, quivering on rock and tree, and on the shifting groups, in strong contrast with the broad bars of moonlight which fall, calm and clear, through the openings of the trees. This is the grand watering place for the encampment, where all the horses are twice a day brought to drink, and these are the mozos, upon whom the task of attending to them devolves. The fires proceed from rude kilns in which the Indian potter is baking his wares, and standing beside a heap of newly-made vessels is his wife, who cries—

"Cantáras, cantáras nuevas,
Queira á comprar?"

We passed through the groups of men and animals with

difficulty, and after a short ride beneath the shadows of a dense forest, came upon what are called the Salines,—broad open spaces, in the rainy season covered with water, but now dry, and hard, and white with an incrustation of salt. In the moonlight they resembled fields of snow, across which wound the black and well-beaten road. Between the Salines and the sea there is a broad, dry swell or elevation of sand, which seems to have been formed by the waves of the ocean, and which is covered with trees. Amongst these we could distinguish the lights of many fires; and as we approached, we heard bursts of merry laughter, and in the pauses between them, the tinkling of musical instruments. We spurred forward, and were soon in the midst of a scene as novel as it was inspiriting. There were broad avenues of huts, festooned with hammocks in front, in which the Señoritas were reclining, in lively conversation with their red-sashed beaus, who idly thrummed their guitars, while the elders of both sexes, seated in the background, puffed their puros and cigaritos, pictures of indolence and physical ease. Flanking the huts were covered carts, within and beneath which children were playing in an ecstacy of glee. Behind, the cattle were tethered to the trees; and here too were the fires for culinary purposes, around which the *cocineras*, chattering like parrots, were preparing the evening cup of chocolate. Now we passed an open, brilliantly lighted hut, in which dulces, wines, and cigars were displayed on shelves twined round with evergreens. In front a dextrous tumbler exhibited his feats for the entertainment of the claret-sipping customers of the establishment, from whom he extracted an occasional *medio* for his pains. Near by, an Indian girl, seated on a mat, exposed a basket of fruits for sale, while another paraded a little stock of gaudy ribbons, to tempt the fancy of some young coquette. In the centre of the encampment, under the shadow of a species of banyan tree, which spread out its foliage like the roof of a dwelling, and

sent down half a hundred distinct trunks to the earth,—here was the station of the guard of police, a detachment of soldiers from the garrison of Leon, whose duty it was, not only to preserve order, but to keep a sharp lookout for contraband aguardiente, the sale of which, except in small quantities, at the government *estanca*, is strictly prohibited. The prohibition did not extend to the fermented *chicha*, or palm-juice, which bacchanalian looking Indians, exhibiting in their own persons the best evidences of its potency, carried round in open calabashes, at a quartillo the *jicora*, equal to about a pint.

The officer of the guard recognized our party, and before I was aware of the movement, the soldiers had fallen into line and presented arms. This was the signal for a general huddle of the idlers. I entered an instant and half-indignant protest against all demonstrations of the kind, and told the commandant that I had left the American Minister at my house in Leon, and had come down to the sea as a simple *paisano*, or citizen of the country. The explanation was in good time; it entertained the quidnuncs, and saved me from much annoyance afterwards. Before we had finished our parley, however, we were made prisoners by my old friend Dr. Juarros, and taken in triumph to his establishment at the court end of the camp. Here we found most of our fair friends of the balconies, sipping chocolate, in a hurricane of spirits. The "gayeties" of the Paseo were clearly at their height, and the infection was so strong that we at once caught the prevailing feeling, and fell into the popular current. We were speedily informed as to what was "up" for the evening in the fashionable circles. A dance by moonlight on the beach, with other divertisements when that wearied, had already been agreed upon. These were to commence at nine o'clock; it was now only eight, and we devoted the intervening hour to a ramble through the encampments, followed by a train of idlers, who seemed greatly

to relish our interest in its novelties. We found that Chinandega, Chichigalpa, El Viejo, and Pueblo Nuevo, as also Telica and the other small towns on the plain of Leon, were all represented here. The Padres too were in force, and seemed quite as jolly as the secular revellers; in fact, a thorough understanding and tacit admission of equality had put all classes in the best of humors, and they mingled freely, without jostling, conceding to each other their peculiar entertainments, and banishing envy and rivalry from the encampment.

There seemed to be a good deal of practical fun going on, of which we witnessed a number of examples before we had half finished our circuit.

We returned to the court end of the encampment in time to accompany the Señoras along a wide path cleared through the bushes which grow, hedge-like, at the edge of the forest, out upon the broad and beautiful beach. The sand was loose and fine and white near the forest, but towards the water it was hard and smooth. Groups of revellers were scattered along the shore, here a set of dancers, and yonder a crowd of boys engaged in noisy sport, or clustering like bees around some vender of fruits, or of "frescos." There were no doorkeepers or ushers to our moonlit ball-room, and the dancers commenced their movements to the measured beat of the waves of the great ocean, which rolled in grandly at our feet. The dense background of forest, the long line of level shore, the clear moonlight, the gayly-dressed dancers and animated groups, the music, the merriment, and the heaving sea,—I could hardly convince myself of the reality of a scene so unlike anything which we had yet witnessed. In the intervals of the dance, cigars and cigaritas were lighted, and at eleven o'clock, when this amusement wearied, a proposition for "un juego," or play, was carried by acclamation. A large circle was drawn in the sand, around which the participants were seated, one of

each sex alternately. Our host, who, although his head was white, nevertheless retained the spirit and the vivacity of youth, responded to the call for "a boy" to take the centre of the circle and set the "juego" in motion, and was received with uproarious merriment. The play seemed to be very much after the order of those with which children amuse themselves in the United States, and was prefaced by a general collection of handkerchiefs from the entire party, which were bound up in a bundle, and deposited in the centre of the ring. The manager then took one at random, and proceeded to question its owner as to the state of his or her affections, and, from his knowledge of the parties, often putting home questions, which were received with shouts of laughter. Certain standard pains and penalties were attached to failures or hesitations in answering, and when the interrogatives were finished, the respondent was assigned a certain place in the circle, the owner of the second handkerchief taking the next, and so on. Some point was attached to these accidental conjunctions, which I was not shrewd enough to discover, but which was a source of infinite amusement to the spectators, and sometimes of evident annoyance to the "juegadoras." I was pressed into a place in the circle, where my verdancy created most outrageous merriment, in which I joined from sheer force of sympathy; for, like the subjects of jokes in general, I could not for the life of me see "the point of it." I was fortunate, however, in having for my "compañera," the Doña I., one of the most beautiful ladies of Leon, blessed with the smallest and whitest possible feet in the world—for, as the ladies had removed their slippers after the dance, was it not impossible to keep their feet concealed? Her husband had fallen to the lot of a great coquette, to whom the oracle in the centre of the ring declared he legitimately belonged.

By midnight the entertainments began to flag in spirit, and the various groups on the shore to move off in the direction

of the encampment. Our party followed, for as it is a portion of the religion of the Paseo to take a sea-bath before sunrise, the keeping of early hours becomes a necessity. As we passed along the shore, I observed that a number of the visitors had taken up their lodgings in the sand, and they seemed to be so comfortable that I quite envied them their novel repose. Upon reaching what our arch hostess called her "glorièta," or bower, we found that a narrow sleeping place had been prepared for us within the wicker cage, which, although neat and snug enough, seemed close and uncomfortable, as compared with the open sands. And we quite shocked our friends by announcing, after a brief conference, that we proposed to sleep on the shore—that we had, in fact, come down with the specific, romantic design of passing a night within reach of the spray of the great ocean. So throwing our blankets over our shoulders, we bade the Señoras good night, and started for the beach again. The encampment was now comparatively still; and the hammocks in front of the various impromptu dwellings were all filled with men, each one occupied with his puro, which brightened with every puff, like the lamp of the fire-fly; for the poppy-crowned god of the ancients, in Central America, smokes a cigar. A single full-sized puro does the business for most men, and none but those afflicted with a troubled conscience or the colic, can keep awake beyond the third. The domestics of the various establishments, and the mozos who had no quarters of their own, were reclining wherever it was most convenient, some on mats or blankets, and others on the bare earth, but all, like their betters, puffing silently at their cigars. There were a few lingering groups; here, in a secluded corner, a party yet absorbed in a game of *monté*, and yonder, in the shadow, a pair of lovers, *téte-à-téte*, conversing in whispers lest they should arouse the paternal dragons. Over all, the soldiers of the patrol kept vigilant

watch, slowly pacing, their muskets glancing in the moonlight, from one end of the camp to the other.

The shore was entirely deserted, except by the scattered slumberers. We selected a place at a distance from them all —for there was room enough—and each one scooping a little hollow in the sand, rolled himself in his blanket and deposited himself for the night. The moon was now low in the west, and its light streamed in a glimmering column across the sea, and upon the waves which, crested with silver, broke in a shower of pearly spray within twenty yards of the spot where we were reclining. The cool breeze came in freshly from the water, its low murmur mingling with the briny hiss of the spent waves chafing on the sand, and the hoarse, deep bass of the heavy surf beating impotently on the distant cape. And thus we slept; the naked earth below, the arching heavens above us, and with the great ocean, rolling its unbroken waves over half the globe, to chant our lullaby!

We were up with the earliest dawn, just as the morning began to tint the clouds in the east, and while the retreating squadrons of night hung heavily in the west. The tide was at its ebb, and already little parties were strolling along the beach to catch stray crabs, or fill their pockets with the delicate shells left by the falling sea. We, too, rambled along the shore, to a high projecting ledge of rocks, against which the ocean dashed angrily with an incessant roar. They were covered with the cones of some species of shell fish, which half a dozen Indian boys, armed with hammers, were detaching, to be cooked for their breakfast. There were also hundreds of lively crabs, which scrambled into the crevices, as we leaped from one huge fragment of rock to the other. Beyond this point, and partially shut in by it, was a little bay, of which we at once took possession, and were soon struggling with the combing waves that rolled in majestically on a hard but even floor of white sand, which preserved the

water as pure as in the open sea. Nor was there the treacherous under-tow, dreaded even by the expertest swimmer, and which detracts so much from the pleasure of the ocean bath. But we had not been long in possession of the charming little bay, which we supposed was ours by right of discovery, when we observed small parties of women emerging from the woods, and gathering on the shore. W. had the vanity to believe that they were attracted by the novelty of white skins; but then, if they had simply come to see, why should they so deliberately unrobe themselves? Why, in fact, should they paddle out into the little bay? We modestly retreated into deeper water as they approached; where we were soon completely blockaded, and began to suspect that perhaps we had got into the "wrong pew," and that this nook of water, from its greater safety, had been assigned as a bathing place for the women!—a suspicion which was confirmed by the rapidly increasing numbers which now thronged between us and the shore, and by observing that the male bathers were concentrated at a point some distance to the right. But our embarrassment was quite superfluous; everybody seemed to act on the principle "Honi soit, qui mal y pense;" and when, after remaining in the water for half an hour longer than we would have chosen, we ran the blockade, the movement caused never so much as a flutter amongst the Naiads!

The rules of the Paseo prescribed an hour's bathing in the morning before breakfast, quite as rigidly as do those of Saratoga a bottle of Congress water at the same hour; and when we returned to the camp with our hostess and the set of which she was the patroness, it was with an appetite which would make a dyspeptic die of envy. Coffee, a hot tortilla, and a grilled *perdiz* or partridge, constituted the matutinal meal; after which, and while the sands were yet in the shadow of the forest, a dashing ride on the beach was also prescribed by the immemorial rules of the Paseo. The gaily-

caparisoned horses were brought up by the not less gaily-caparisoned gallants, and the Señoras lifted to their seats in front. Some of them preferred to ride alone; and when all was ready, away they dashed, now coursing along the edge of the forest, and anon skirting the water so closely that the spray, rising beneath the strokes of the rapid hoofs, fell in glittering showers on horse and rider.

At ten o'clock, the force of the sun begins to be felt; a cup of tiste or of chocolate is now in order, followed by a game at cards beneath the arbor-like corridors; and then, when the sun has gained the meridian, a siesta opportunely comes in, with "frescos" and cigars *ad libitum*, to fill up the hours until dinner, a meal which, in common with breakfast and supper, is chiefly made up of fish, freshly caught, and game, filled out with an endless variety of fruits and dulces. Besides visiting, and other devices to kill time, there is always in the afternoon some kind of divertisement, generally impromptu, to occupy the attention until the hour of the evening bath. The afternoon of our visit, the divertisement consisted in a grand search by the police for contraband *aguardiente*, supposed to be concealed in a marsh, just back of the encampment, which resulted in their getting mired and completely bedaubed with mud, before they discovered that they had been adroitly duped by a wag, who the evening preceding had set the whole encampment in an uproar by raising a false alarm of "*los facciosos!*" But this time his luck failed him; he was caught by the indignant soldiers, and, amidst the roars of the entire encampment, was treated to a most effective mud bath, from which he emerged dripping with mire. He was next taken to the sea, and unmercifully ducked, then brought back, tumbled in the marsh again, and, finally left to extricate himself as he best could. He took his punishment like a philosopher, and contrived to get his captors quite as completely in the mud as he was in the mire. This fellow's love for practical jokes, and the ex-

travagant merriment which this rude sport occasioned, illustrate what I before said of the keen appreciation of the ridiculous which pervades all classes in Central America, and which is perhaps due not less to a primitive condition of society, than to that innate comic element which is so inexplicably associated with the gravity of the Spanish character.

It is often the case that the higher officers of state come down to the Paseo. The presence of Gen. Muñoz seemed to be specially desired, as much, I thought, on account of the military band which accompanies him on such occasions, as of his own social qualities. But the affairs of the government were now in an interesting, not to say critical state, in consequence of the threatened revolution in Honduras, and the ladies had to content themselves with the hackneyed, and not over-exhilarating music of the guitar and violin. But they were not the people to permit what the transcendentalists call the "unattainable" to destroy an appreciation and full enjoyment of the "present and actual." On the contrary, they seemed only to regret that the idle, careless life which they now led must terminate with the decline of the moon; a regret, however, wholesomely tempered by the prospect of its renewal during the full moon of April, when it is customary to return again, for a few days, to "wind up the season."

My official duties did not permit of more than one day's absence from the seat of Government, and on the second evening, under most solemn promises of a speedy return and protracted stay, just as the general movement to the beach for the evening dance was commencing, we bade our host good-by, and struck into the road for Leon. A rapid ride of two hours over the open Salines, through forest and jicoral, and our horses clattered over the pavements of Leon to our own silent dwelling. Circumstances prevented my return to the sea; but when the Señoras came back, a week

later, I had full accounts of all that had transpired in the way of match-making or adventure.

It not unfrequently happens that eight or ten thousand persons are collected on the sea-shore, at the height of the Paseo; but of late years the attendance has not been so full as formerly. "You should have seen it thirty years ago," said an ancient lady, with a long-drawn sigh, "when Leon was a rich and populous city; it is nothing now!"

THE TOUCAN.

CHAPTER XXII.

PROPOSED VISIT TO SAN SALVADOR AND HONDURAS—DEPARTURE FROM LEON —CHINANDEGA—LADRONES—THE GOITRE—GIGANTIC FOREST TREES—PORT OF TEMPISQUE—THE ESTERO REAL AND ITS SCENERY—A NOVEL CUSTOM HOUSE AND ITS COMMANDANTE—NIGHT ON THE ESTERO—BAY OF FONSECA —VOLCANO OF COSEGUINA—THE ISLAND OF TIGRE—PORT OF AMAPALA—VIEW FROM THE ISLAND—ENTRANCE TO THE BAY—SACATE GRANDE—EXCITING NEWS FROM HONDURAS—ENGLISH FORTIFICATIONS—EXTENT, RESOURCES, AND IMPORTANCE OF THE BAY—DEPARTURE FOR THE SEAT OF WAR.

I HAD now been nearly a year in Nicaragua, and although repeatedly urged to do so, had not yet found an opportunity of visiting the neighboring States. At this time, however, the condition of public affairs was such as to permit of a brief absence from the capital, and I lost no time in preparing for a journey to Honduras and San Salvador,—States identified with Nicaragua in their general policy, and struggling, in concert with her, to revive the national spirit, and build up again the prostrate fabric of the Republic. This effort, as I have already said, was opposed by the old serviles in the city of Guatemala, and their coadjutors in the other States, who had succeeded in exciting disturbances in Honduras, which threatened the complete overthrow of its Government. Gen. Guardiola, an able but impetuous officer, the head of the army of that State, had been so far deceived and misled by them, as to put himself in arms against the constituted authorities. He had, in fact, obtained possession of the capital, and at the head of a large force was now

marching against Señor Lindo, the President, who had taken up his position and fortified himself at the town of Nacaome, near the Bay of Fonseca. Here he had solicited the intervention of Nicaragua and San Salvador, which States were bound by treaty to sustain Honduras and each other whenever they should be threatened with violence from within or from abroad. San Salvador had accordingly sent a considerable force to the support of Lindo, under the command of Gen. Cabañas, a distinguished officer of the old Republic, and Nicaragua was making preparations to afford further aid in case of necessity.

Under these circumstances, and with the hope of being able to avert a collision, which could only result in evil, I started on my journey. It was at the beginning of the "Semana Santa," or Holy Week, and by the dim, gray light of the morning, as we rode through the silent city, we could make out the arches and evergreen arbors with which the streets were spanned and decorated, preparatory to this principal festival of the calendar. Early morning on the plain of Leon, when the purple volcanoes are relieved against the sun's coronal of gold, and their ragged summits seem crusted over with precious stones, while the broad plain rests in deep shadow, or catches here and there a faint reflection from the clouds,—early morning on the plain of Leon, always beautiful, was never more gorgeous than now. Broad daylight overtook us at the Quebrada of Quesalguaque; and although the dust was deep, for it was now past the middle of the dry season, yet we rode into Chinandega, twenty-five miles, in time for breakfast.

Here I found my old friend Dr. Brown, who had been the first to welcome me at San Juan, and who had just arrived from Panama in the "Gold Hunter," the first American steamer which had ever entered the ancient harbor of Realejo. Here we also found a considerable party of Americans from California, homeward bound, "with pockets full of

rocks," who, taken with the luxuriant climate and country, and oriental habits of the people, had rented a house, purchased horses, and organized an establishment, half harem and half caravansary, where feasting and jollity, Venus and Bacchus, and Mercury and Momus, and half of the rare old rollicking gods, banished from refined circles, not only found sanctuary, but held undisputed sway. They were popular amongst the natives, who thought them "hombres muy vivos," and altogether prime fellows, for they never haggled about prices, but submitted to extortion with a grace worthy of Caballeros with a mint at their command.

The streets near the plaza were blockaded with carts and piles of stones, for the troop of captured ladrones had been put to the useful employment of paving the principal thoroughfares. They were all chained, but in a manner not interfering with their ability to labor, although effectually precluding escape. Yet they were guarded by soldiers, man for man, who lounged lazily in the doorways of the houses on the shaded side of the streets. I observed that most of the criminals were Sambos, mixed Negro and Indian, who seem to combine the vices of both races, with few if any of their good qualities. Yet physically they were both larger and better proportioned than the parent stocks.[1] Their exists between them and the Ladinos, or mixed whites and Indians, a deeply seated hostility, greater than between any of the other castes of the country.

[1] Dr. Von Tschudi makes a similar observation concerning this caste in Peru. He says: "they are the most miserable class of half-castes; with them every vice seems to have attained its utmost development; and it may confidently be said that not one in a thousand of them is a useful member of society, or a good subject of the State. Four-fifths of the criminals in the city jail of Lima are Sambos. Their figures are athletic, and their color black, sometimes tinged with olive-brown. Their noses are not as flat as those of the negroes, but their lips are quite as prominent."—*Travels in Peru*, p. 84.

In Chinandega, as in fact every other town of the State, I observed numerous instances of the *goitre*. It is chiefly, if not wholly, confined to the women. This circumstance particularly attracted my attention, as it is popularly supposed that this is a disease peculiar to elevated or mountainous regions. The inhabited portions of Nicaragua, excepting the sparsely populated districts of Segovia and Chontales, are elevated not exceeding from one to five hundred feet above the sea. Chinandega is only seventy feet, and Leon, Granada, and Rivas, not more than a hundred and fifty feet, above tide water; yet in all these towns the goitre is common. I also saw several cases of *elephantiasis*, but they are rare.

We spent our first night at our old quarters in El Viejo, and started next morning before daylight for what is called "El Puerto de Tempisque," on the Estero Real, where we had engaged a bongo to take us to the Island of Tigre, in the Bay of Fonseca. The distance to Tempisque is about seven leagues; the first three leading through an open, level, and very well cultivated country. That passed, we came to a gigantic forest, including many cedro, cebia,[1] and mahogany trees, amongst which the road wound with labyrinthine intricacy. This forest is partially under the lee of the volcano of Viejo, where showers fall for nearly the whole of the year, and hence the cause of its luxuriance. Here we overtook our patron and his men, marching Indian file, each with a little bag of netting, containing some cheese, plantains, and

[1] The cebia, or wild cotton tree, is one of the most imposing of the forest's monarchs. It grows rapidly, and to a great size. I have seen a single trunk seventy feet long, forty-four feet in circumference at one end, and thirty-seven at the other. The wood is lighter and less durable than pine, but it is worked easily. This tree is generally used for bongos or piraguas. It produces large pods, filled with a downy substance like floss silk, which is used in a variety of ways, for stuffing cushions, pillows, etc. It may, no doubt, be put to other economical purposes.

tortillas for the voyage, thrown over one shoulder, a blanket over the other, and carrying the inseparable machete resting in the hollow of the left arm.

Within a mile or two of Tempisque, the ground began to rise, and we found ourselves on a high, broad ridge of lava, which had ages ago descended from the great volcano above mentioned. It was partially covered with a dry and arid soil, supporting a few coyol palms, some groups of the Agave Americana, and a great variety of cacti, which contrive to flourish where no other plants can grow. The coyol palm is the raggedest of the whole family of palms, yet it is one of the most useful. Its flower is the largest and most magnificent to be found beneath the tropics; it forms a cluster a yard in length and of equal circumference, of the color of frosted gold, flanked and relieved by a deep brown shell or husk, within which it is concealed until it is matured, when it bursts from its prison and shames the day with its glories. The fruit is small, not larger than a walnut, but it is produced in clusters of many hundreds each. The kernels resemble refined wax, and burn almost as readily; when pressed, they yield a fine, clear oil, equal to the best sperm, and well adapted for domestic uses. The shell of the nut is hard, black, and susceptible of the highest polish, and is laboriously carved by the natives into rings and other articles of ornament, which, when set in gold, are very unique and beautiful, and highly valued by strangers. But the uses of this palm do not end here. The heart of the tree is soft, and may be cooked and eaten. And if a hollow or cavity is cut in the trunk, near its top, it soon fills with juice, of a slightly pungent flavor, called *chiche* by the Indians, which is a delicious and healthful, and when allowed to ferment, an intoxicating beverage.

From the summit of the lava ridge, we obtained a view of the level alluvions bordering the Bay of Fonseca. They are covered with an unbroken forest, and the weary eye

traverses a motionless ocean of verdure, tree-tops on tree-tops, in apparently unending succession.

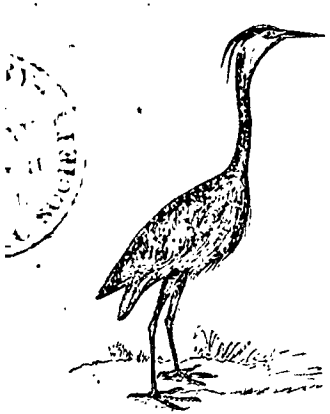
We paused for a moment to contemplate the scene; but its vastness and silence were painful, and I felt relieved, when, after descending rapidly for ten minutes, we found ourselves amidst some evidences of life, at the "Puerto de Tempisque." These evidences consisted of a single shed, open upon three sides, and inhabited by an exceedingly ill-looking mestizo, an old crone, and an Indian girl, naked to the waist, whose occupation extended to bringing water, and grinding maize for tortillas. There was a fine spring at the base of the hill near by, and around it were some groups of sailors, engaged in cooking their breakfast. The ground back of the hut was elevated and dry, but immediately in front commenced the mangrove swamps. Here too, scooped in the mud, was a small shallow basin, and extending from it into the depths of the swamp, a narrow canal, four or five feet deep, and six or eight in breadth, communicating with the Estero Real. The tide was out, and the slimy bottom of both basin and canal, in which some ugly bongos were lying, was exposed and festering in the sun. Altogether it was a forbidding place, suggestive of agues and musquitos. Ben prepared breakfast, and meantime I amused myself with a tame *coati* or tropical raccoon, which I found beneath the shed, and which was as frolicksome and malicious as a kitten. Its principal delight seemed to be to bite the toes of the Indian girl, who evidently owed it no good will, and was only prevented from doing it a damage, by the old crone, whose pet it was.

In the course of a couple of hours the tide began to rise; our bongo was loaded, and by eleven o'clock, we were pushing slowly through the narrow canal. After penetrating about three hundred yards, we entered an arm of the Estero. It was wider than the canal, and permitted the use of oars. All around us, so dense that not a ray of the sun could penetrate, was a forest of mangroves. These trees cover the low

alluvions of the coast, which are overflowed by the tide, to the entire exclusion of all other vegetation. Their trunks commence at the height of eight or ten feet from the ground, and are supported by naked roots shooting downward and outward, like the legs of a tripod, hundreds in number, and those of one tree interlocking with those of another, so as to constitute an impenetrable thicket. Bare, slimy earth, a gray wilderness of roots surmounted by tall spire-like trunks, enveloped in a dense robe of opaque, green leaves, with no signs of life except croaking water-fowls and muddy crabs clinging to the roots of the trees, an atmosphere saturated with damps, and loaded with an odor of seething mire—these are the predominating features of a mangrove swamp! I never before comprehended fully the aspects of nature, described to us by geologists, at the period of the coal formations,—"when rivers swollen with floods, and surcharged with detritus, heaved mournfully through the silence of primeval forests; when endless fens existed, where the children of nature stood in ranks so close and impenetrable, that no bird could pierce the net-work of their branches, nor reptile move through the stockade of their trunks; when neither bird nor quadruped had yet started into being." Half an hour carried us through these Stygian solitudes; and I breathed freer, when our boat pushed into the broad and magnificent Estero Real. This is an arm of the sea, projecting from the lower extremity of the Bay of Fonseca, for a distance of sixty miles, behind the volcanic range of the Marabios, in the direction of Lake Managua. Where we entered, about thirty miles above its mouth, it was three hundred yards wide, and forty-eight feet, or eight fathoms, deep. The tide, which here rises about ten feet, had just turned, and we floated down rapidly, with the current. The banks were now full; the water washed the feet of the mangroves, and they appeared as if rising from the sea. Being all of about equal height, and their foliage compact and

heavy, they shut in the Estero as with walls of emerald. The great volcano of El Viejo, its dark brown summit traced boldly against the sky, came into view, sole monarch of the scene, now on one side, now on the other, as we followed the windings of the stream. Though the elements of the scenery were not many, yet the atmospheric effects, the long, dreamy vistas, and the dark, leafy arches, bending over some narrow arm of the Estero, left an impression upon my memory, in many respects as pleasing, and in all as ineffaceable, as the richer and more varied scenery around the great lakes of the interior.

As we proceeded, and the tide fell, the steep, slimy banks, before concealed by the water, began to come in view. Seen from the middle of the Estero, they appeared of a rich umber color, contrasting strongly with the light blue of the water and the dense green of the trees. Life now began to animate the hitherto silent banks; for thousands of water-fowls, before concealed in the leafy coverts, emerged to prey upon laggard snails, and to snap up presumptuous crabs, induced by the sunshine and the slime to linger on the shore, when they should have been "full fathoms five" beneath the water. Amongst these birds I then noticed some white and rose-colored herons, of exceeding beauty. Many of the latter are to be seen on the shores of Lake Nicaragua, in the vicinity of the Estero of Panaloya.



At five o'clock, during the last hour of the ebb, we observed that the left bank of the Estero was higher than the other, and that the stream had now widened to upwards of half a mile, and had deepened to ten fathoms. It is here called "Playa Grande," and here the Government maintains a kind

of Custom House. When we came in sight of the establishment, our sailors took to their oars, and pulled towards the shore. If Tempisque was solitary, this was utterly desolate. The trees had been cleared away, for a few hundred feet, and in the midst of the open space stood two thatched sheds, elevated on posts, so that the floors were eight or ten feet above the mud, which was now partially dried, cracked, and covered with leprous spots of salt, left from the water of the overflows. To reach these structures, a tree had been cut so as to fall down the bank; this was notched on the upper surface, and stakes had been driven at the sides, to prevent whoever should attempt to pass from slipping off into the mire. As we approached, the Nicaraguan flag was displayed, and the half-dozen soldiers comprising the guard were drawn up on the platform of the first hut. They presented arms, and went through other formalities, in obedience to the Commandante's emphatic orders, with a gravity which, considering the place and the circumstances, was sufficiently comical. The Commandante assisted me up the slimy log, and upon the platform of the Custom House, and gave me a seat in a hammock. Beneath the roof were several coffin-like shelves, shut in closely by curtains of cotton cloth, and reached by pegs driven in the posts of the edifice. These were dormitories or sleeping places, thus fortified against the musquitos. From the roof depended quantities of *plantains*, *maduras*, and *verdes*, intermixed with festoons of *tasajo* or hung-beef. A large box filled with sand, at one end of the platform, was the fire-place, and around it were a couple of old women engaged in grinding corn for tortillas. The Commandante smiled at my evident surprise, and asked if we had anything quite equal to this, in the way of customs establishments, in the United States? It was a delightful place, he added, for meditation; and a good one withal for young officers lavish of their pay, for here they couldn't spend a quartillo of it.

He had held the place for three months; but the Government was merciful, and never inflicted it upon one man for more than six, unless he had specially excited its displeasure. "In fact," continued the Commandante, "my devotion to the women is the cause of my banishment; not that I was more open or immoderate in my amours than others, but because my superior was my rival!" And the Commandante made a facetious allusion to King David, and the bad example he had set to persons in authority. After this I might have left the Commandante with an impression that, whatever his past delinquencies, he was now a correct and proper young man. But just at that moment the curtains of one of the dormitories, which I had observed was occupied, were pushed apart, and a pair of satin slippers, and eke a pair of tiny feet were projected; followed in due course by the whole figure of a yellow girl, of more than ordinary pretensions to beauty, dressed in the height of Nicaraguan fashion. I comprehended at once that she had fled to the dormitory, upon our approach, to make her toilette; and when the Commandante introduced me to her as his *sobrina*, niece, I only ejaculated, *picaro!* rascal!

There was little to interest us at this desolate place, and although the Commandante urged us to stay to dinner, it was of more consequence to avail ourselves of the ebb tide than to eat; so the six soldiers were paraded again, and we pushed off, and fell down the stream. As we rounded the first bend, we discovered several large boats, fastened to the shore, and waiting for the turn of the tide, to ascend the stream—for the current in the channel is so strong as to render it impossible to row against it. Consequently all navigation is governed by the rise and fall of the tide. The boats were filled with men, women, and children, flying from the seat of war in Honduras. They gave us a confused account of the advance of Gen. Guardiola to the coast, and said that there had

been a battle, in which the Government had been beaten, with a variety of other startling rumors, which turned out to be unfounded.

At six o'clock it was slack water, and our men pulled for awhile at the oars. But the moment the flow commenced, they pushed in at a place where a little cleared spot, and some grass, showed that there was an elevation of the shore, and made fast to the roots of the overhanging mangroves. The banks were very abrupt, and covered with little soldier crabs, which paraded beneath the trees, and scrambled along their roots in thousands. Some of the men stripped, dragged themselves up the slimy banks, and with some wood, which they had brought, made a fire. For our own part, we essayed to fish; but did not get even the poor encouragement of a nibble. Yet there were abundance of fishes, of a peculiar kind, all around us. They were called "anteojos," or spy-glasses, by the sailors, from their goggle eyes, which, placed at the top of their heads, project above the water, like so many bubbles. They were from six inches to a foot long, with bodies of a muddy, yellow color, and went in shoals. When frightened, they would dart off, fairly leaping out of the water, making a noise like a discharge of buck-shot skipping past. They were impudent fishes, and gathered round the boat, with their staring eyes, while we were fishing, with an expression equivalent to "what gringos!"

Our boat rose with the tide, and when it got within reach of the overhanging branches, we clambered ashore. We found that here was an open, sandy space, a hundred feet square, covered with traces of fires, and with oyster and muscle shells,—evidences that it was a favorite stopping-place with the marineros. The sun had so far declined as to throw the whole Estero in the shade, while the light still glowed on the opposite leafy shores. Altogether I was taken with the scene, and sipped my claret amidst the swarthy sailors with a genuine Robinson Crusoeish feeling. As night

came on, we pushed out into the Estero, to avoid the musquitos, and cast our anchor (a big stone) in eleven fathoms water.

The moon was past her first quarter, and the night was one of the loveliest. The silence was unbroken, except by the sound of the distant surf, brought to us by the sea breeze, and by an occasional, sullen plunge, as of an alligator. I have said that at this season, when the grass on the hills, with the ephemeral vegetation generally, is dried up, nearly the whole country is burnt over. The forests through which we had ridden that morning had been traversed by fiery columns. And now, as it grew dark, we could see them slowly advancing up the sides of the great volcano. At midnight they had reached its summit, and spreading laterally, presented the appearance of a flaming triangle, traced against the sky. So must the volcano have appeared in that remote period when the molten lava flowed down its steep sides, and devastated the plain at its base.

During the night, when the tide turned, the patron lifted anchor, and floated down with the current. The proceeding did not disturb my slumbers, and when I woke next morning, we were in the midst of the Bay of Fonseca, with a fair wind and all sails set, steering for the island of Tigre, which lifted its high, dim cone immediately in front. Upon our right, distant, but distinct beneath the morning light, was the low, ragged volcano of Coseguina, whose terrible eruption in 1838 I have already described. Other volcanoes and volcanic peaks defined the outlines of this glorious Bay; and the porpoises tumbling around us, and gulls poising in the air, or slowly flapping their crescent wings just above the deep green waves, all reminded us that we were near the great ocean. We went through the water with great velocity, and at eleven o'clock, when the breeze began to decline, we were within five or six miles of the island, which now presented a most magnificent appearance. It is about thirty

miles in circumference, with sloping shores; but immediately in the centre rises a regular, conical, volcanic mountain, between four and five thousand feet high, clothed almost to the summit with a robe of trees. The top, however, is bare, and apparently covered with burnt earth, of a rich brown color.

VOLCANO OF COSEGUINA.

At noon, the wind having entirely died away, the men took to their oars, and we coasted for upwards of two hours along the base of the island, before reaching the Port of Amapala, which is situated upon its northern side. In places the shore was projecting and abrupt, piled high with rocks of lava, black and forbidding, upon which the sea-birds perched in hundreds; elsewhere it receded, forming quiet little bays, with broad sandy beaches, and a dense background of trees. We finally came to what seemed to be the entrance of a narrow valley, where the forest had been partially removed. Here we saw the thatched roofs of embowered huts, with cattle grazing around them; and shortly after, turning round an abrupt lava promontory, where, upon a

huge rock, the English had painted the flag of their country, in evidence of having taken possession of the island "in the name of Her Majesty, Victoria the First,"—we darted into the little bay of Amapala.

Two brigs, one Dutch, and the other American under the Chilian flag, were lying in the harbor, which was still and smooth as a mirror, bending with a crescent sweep into the land, with a high promontory on either side, but with a broad, clear beach in front, upon which were drawn up a great variety of bongos and canoes, including one or two trim little schooners. In a row, following the curve of the shore, were the huts of the inhabitants, built of canes, and thatched in the usual manner. Back of these the ground rose gently, forming a broad ridge, and over all towered the volcano of El Tigre. The most conspicuous features of the village were two immense warehouses, belonging to Don Carlos Dardano, an Italian merchant, whose enterprise had given importance to the place. Through his influence the State of Honduras, to which the island belongs, had constituted it a Free Port, and made a concession of a certain quantity of land to every family which should establish itself there. As a consequence, within two or three years, from a temporary stopping-place for fishermen, Amapala had come to possess a considerable and constantly increasing population and trade, and now bade fair to rival La Union, the only port of San Salvador on the Bay of Fonseca.

We landed immediately in front of the principal warehouse, which was now closed, by a decree of the authorities against Don Carlos, who had been weak enough to accept the office of "Superintendent of the Island of Tigre," during the temporary English occupation, and who had been obliged to retire into San Salvador, when it was evacuated. We found one of his agents, however, a German, who, with his family, lived in the smaller building, eating and sleeping amongst great heaps of hides, and piles of indigo and tobacco

ISLAND OF TIGRE.

LITH OF SARONY & MAJOR N.Y.

bales, bags of Chilian flour, and boxes of merchandise. He appeared to be a civil, well educated man, but wore his shirt outside of his pantaloons, and altogether conformed to the habits of the people around him.

The Commandante of the port had withdrawn the principal part of the garrison, and joined the forces of the Government at Nacaome. His lieutenant, nevertheless, "put himself at my disposition," in the most approved style; but I made no demand upon his courtesies, except for a guide to lead us to the top of the hill overlooking the port. A scramble of half an hour brought us to the spot. It was cleared, and commanded a most extensive view of the Bay and its islands and distant shores. At our feet, upon one hand, were the town and harbor, with a broad sweep of tree-tops intervening; and on the other, a wide savanna, forming a gigantic amphitheatre, in which were gardeiis of unbounded luxuriance. But these only constituted the foreground of the magnificent panorama which was spread out before us, and which combined all the elements of the grand and beautiful. A small portion of the view, the entrance to the Bay from the ocean, is presented in the frontispiece to the first volume of this work. Upon one side is the volcano of Coseguina, rough and angular, and upon the other that of Conchagua, distinguished for its regular proportions and sweeping outlines. They are stupendous landmarks, planted by nature to direct the mariner to the great and secure haven at their base. Between them are the high islands of Conchaguita and Mianguera, breaking the swell of the sea, and dividing the entrance into three broad channels, through each of which the largest vessels may pass with ease. All of these entrances, as shown by the map, are commanded by the Tigre; and it is this circumstance, joined to its capabilities for easy defence, which gives the island much of its importance.

The view to the north takes in the islands of Martin Pe-

rez, Posesion, and Punta de Sacate, belonging to San Salvador; and Sacate Grande, belonging to Honduras. These had all been seized by the English at the time of their piratical descent on the Tigre. Sacate Grande is the largest, and, in common with the rest, is of volcanic origin. It is rough and fantastic in outline, and almost entirely destitute of forest trees. The scoriaceous hills support only *sacate*, or grass, which, during the dry season, becomes yellow, and gives the island the appearance of being covered with ripe and golden grain.

But beyond the islands, which Mr. Stephens has observed surpass those of the Grecian Archipelago in beauty, is a belt of mountains on the main-land, relieved by the volcanoes of San Miguel and Guanacaure, and numerous other tall but nameless peaks. I spent an hour on the hill in mapping the Bay and taking the bearings of the principal landmarks, and at four o'clock returned to the port, hungry, but too much excited by the scene to feel wearied. Here I found an officer of the Government of Honduras, who had come down to procure additional supplies for the army. He gave me the startling news that Gen. Guardiola, at the head of three thousand men, was only one day's march from Nacaome, and that a battle might now be hourly expected. I had intended to spend the night on the island; but this news, joined to the solicitations of the officer himself, determined me to proceed at once to San Lorenzo, on the main-land, and thence, next morning, to Nacaome. But our bongo was high and dry on the beach, and we had to wait for the rising of the tide in order to get her off. Meantime we dined, and strolled along the shore to a little headland, which the English, during their stay, had attempted to fortify. They had constructed a kind of stockade, surrounded by a ditch, with embrasures for artillery, and loopholes for musketry. But in order to save labor, and yet to frighten off assailants, a considerable part of the enclosure was built of a kind of

wicker-work of canes, plastered on the outside with mud. It was pierced for guns also, and looked as formidable as some of the pasteboard forts of the Chinese, from whom the suggestion seems to have been derived. The enclosure was now used as a pen for some sheep, which the agent of Don Carlos had recently introduced on the island. I hope this fact will afford some consolation to the builders; it must be gratifying to them to know that their labors have not been wholly lost![1]

The Bay of Fonseca probably constitutes the finest harbor on the Pacific. In its capacities it is said to surpass its only rival, the Bay of San Francisco, which it much resembles in form. Its entire length, within the land, is about eighty miles, by from thirty to thirty-five in breadth. The three States of Honduras, San Salvador, and Nicaragua, have ports upon it. The principal port is that of La Union, situated on the subordinate bay of the same name, and belonging to San Salvador. The inner shores are low, but with a country back of them of unbounded fertility, penetrated by several considerable streams, some of which may be navigated. The mountains which separate it from the sea are high, and effectually protect it from the winds and storms. It has, in nearly every part, an abundance of water for the largest

[1] Had I not determined to exclude from my Narrative any extended allusion to political affairs with which I was in any way connected, this would be a proper place to present a true statement of the circumstances of the seizure of this island and Bay by the officers of Great Britain. These circumstances have been grossly misrepresented; and a British Envoy has gone to the extent of asserting, not only that the outrage was "provoked" by circumstances which transpired *after the act was committed*, and with which the perpetrators were wholly unacquainted, but also to admit, in his correspondence with a confederate, that this assertion was made with a full knowledge of its falsity, and for the purpose of shielding that confederate from odium, by shifting it to innocent shoulders! Should self-justification seem to require it, a succinct account of that seizure may be given in the Appendix to this volume.

ships, which, in the little bay of Amapala, may lie within a cable-length of the shore. The entrance may be effected with any wind, and the exit can always be made with the tide. Fresh water may be obtained in abundance on the islands and along the shores; the climate is delicious and healthy; the surrounding mountains furnish timber of superior quality, including pine, for ship building and repairs; in short, nature has here lavished every requisite to make the Bay of Fonseca the great naval centre of the globe. But what gives peculiar importance to it, and lends significance to the attempted seizure by Great Britain, is the fact that, if a ship canal is ever opened across the Continent, it seems more than probable that its western terminus must be, *via* the Estero Real, in this Bay. The evidence in support of this opinion will appear in another connection.

The islands in the Bay are of great beauty. Several of them had anciently a large population of Indians. In Dampier's time there were two considerable Indian towns on the island of Tigre, and one on Mianguera. But the natives were so much oppressed by the pirates who made this Bay their principal station on the South Sea, that they fled to the main-land, and have never returned. Drake had his head-quarters on the island of Tigre, during his operations in the Pacific, and, under one pretext or another, it has been much frequented by British national vessels for many years. Its importance, in a naval point of view, is well understood by the Admiralty, under whose orders it was carefully surveyed by Capt. Belcher, R. N., in 1839. No American war vessel, it is probably unnecessary to add, has ever entered the waters of this Bay, although it is clear, to the narrowest comprehension, that it completely commands the whole coast from Panama to San Diego, and in the hands of any maritime nation, must control the transit across either isthmus, and with it the commerce of the world.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DEPARTURE FOR SAN LORENZO—MORNING SCENES—NOVEL CAVALCADE—A HIGH PLAIN—LIFE AMONGST REVOLUTIONS—NACAOME—MILITARY RECEPTION—GEN. CABANAS—AN ALARM—NEGOTIATIONS—BRITISH INTERFERENCE—A TRUCE—PROSPECTS OF ADJUSTMENT—AN EVENING REVIEW—THE SOLDIERY—A NIGHT RIDE—RETURN TO SAN LORENZO.

A LITTLE before sunset, the tide had lifted our boat, and the wind being brisk and fair, we embarked for San Lorenzo. Our course was along the base of Sacate Grande. The vaqueros had set fire to the dry grass that afternoon, and when the night fell, it revealed a broad sheet of flame, extending entirely across the island, sending up vast billows of black smoke, and moving onward with a deep and steady roar, like that of the ocean. Spires of flame, like flashes of lightning, often darted upward amongst these clouds of smoke, or swooping downward, set fire to the grass in advance of the devouring column. The spectacle was grand, and I watched it until midnight, and then crept beneath the chopa and went to sleep.

I was awakened by a sense of suffocation, and found that it had rained during the night, and that the sailors had let down the flaps of the chopa, thus confining us in a low and narrow space, not much larger than an ordinary oven. I hastened to drag myself out upon the pineta. Day was just breaking, and a hot, gray mist hung around us, half concealing yet magnifying every object. I could only make out that the bongo was lying high up on a broad, black beach, fifty yards from a sullen looking river, whose opposite shore

was overhung with drooping trees. The sailors were all gone, and I was perfectly ignorant of our position. I felt oppressed by a lassitude such as I had never before experienced, and longed for water, if only to wash my hands and face. The river was dark and sullen, yet it appeared as if it might refresh me. So I got over the side of the boat, but sunk at once to the instep in a black, sickening mire. I nevertheless advanced towards the water's edge, and had nearly reached it, when I discovered a number of large alligators, trailing their ugly carcasses through the mud, not ten feet distant. In the deceptive light they looked absolutely monstrous. I did not stop to take a second view, but retreated to the bongo with a rapidity which five minutes before I would have thought impossible. Here I roused Ben, and then commenced hallooing for our patron. Directly we heard his voice in the distance, and soon after he came stalking towards us, appearing through the mist like one of the genii of Arabian story.

It turned out that we were about three leagues up an estero formed by the river Nacaome, and within six leagues of the town of the same name, whither we were bound. A short distance in advance, and to the right of us, the patron said there were some cattle ranchos, whither he had gone with the officer who had accompanied us, to obtain horses for our expedition. I inquired with what luck, and received the expected answer, "no hay!" accompanied with the usual expressive wave of the forefinger. It was certainly a comfortable prospect, stuck there in the mud, amidst mists, and deadly damps, and alligators. My previous sense of exhaustion rapidly gave place to a vague feeling of injury and general discontent and disgust. Determined to know the worst, I ordered the patron to lead me to the ranchos. They were miserable huts, hastily constructed of bushes and palm-leaves, surrounded by a drove of melancholy cows, which some fever-and-agueish looking women were engaged in

milking. A brawny mestizo, with a deep scar across his face, sat by a little fire, turning some pieces of meat on the coals; and a pack of mangy dogs, showing their long, white teeth, sneaked snarling around our legs. I bade the brawny mestizo good morning; he looked up with a furtive, suspicious glance, but made no reply. How far all these circumstances contributed to restore good humor, the reader can readily imagine. My first impulse was to shoot a dog or two, and their owner in the bargain, if he made any disturbance in consequence, but thought better of it, and sat down gloomily in a damp hammock which I found strung between the trees.

Shortly after, my companions came up from the bongo, and the mist lifting, and matters generally assuming a more cheerful aspect, we took possession of the mestizo's fire, and began to prepare breakfast. A few conciliatory reals set the women to grinding tortillas for us, and really made the mestizo himself complacent,—at any rate, he exhibited some grim signs of gratitude by kicking his curs from around our legs.

We had hardly finished our breakfast, when our friend, the officer, returned, accompanied by some Indians, one of whom was an alcalde, each leading a couple of horses. Such horses! They were "caballos del campo," rough beasts from the ranchos, long ago mortgaged to the buzzards. We had fortunately brought our saddles with us, and were not long in getting mounted, and on our road—if the bed of the river can be called a road. It was a cavalcade worthy of Hogarth's pencil, and each horseman laughed inordinately, at the comical figure cut by his companions. At the head of the party rode our Indian alcalde, with the air of a man discharging an exalted and responsible duty. He had heard of "El Norte," but had no clear notions of its whereabouts; he couldn't tell whether it was northward or southward, but knew that it was "muy poderoso," very powerful, and had

vessels of war, and a great many cannons. He led us up the stream to a ford, crossing which, we struck into a broad path connecting with the camino real to Nacaome. The vegetation in the river valley was very luxuriant, affording food for many droves of cattle, which, at the height of the dry season, are driven down from the elevated, parched savannas of the interior to browse here. This practice accounted for the number of temporary huts which we passed in our march, and which were only built to last a month or two, while the cattle remained in the valley.

The alcalde took us out of our way to his own house, which was a rude but permanent establishment, where he insisted on our stopping long enough to drink a calabash of milk; I obliged him by dismounting and entering for a moment. The women were engaged in their eternal occupation of grinding tortillas, and, instead of rising to welcome us, bashfully continued their work. They were apparently pure Indians, but of a lighter shade than those of Nicaragua. They belong to a nation denominated Cholutecan, which is evidently a Mexican name, and probably the same with Cholultecan, i. e., people of Cholula, the place of the great teocalli or pyramid. A short distance beyond the alcalde's house, we reached a broad plain, covered only with clumps of gum arabic bushes, interspersed with calabash trees. These did not particularly obstruct the view, and as the plain was high, we could overlook the country for a great distance around. Behind us was a wide expanse of low alluvial land, densely wooded, with the high islands of the Gulf distinctly visible beyond; while in front rose a series of ragged, blue mountains, the outliers of the great central plateau of Honduras. As we advanced, the plain became more open, but strangely traversed, at intervals, by narrow strips of lava, projecting only a few feet above the ground. Finally the bushes disappeared altogether, and the plain assumed the character of an undulating savanna. And now, looking like some old

fortress, we discovered, a long way in advance, the low, straggling buildings of a hacienda, from which radiated lines of stone walls, the first we had seen in Central America. It was a grateful sight, and inspired our Rozinantes to such a degree, that, by a liberal application of whip and spur, they were actually seduced into a gallop—which they kept up in a paroxysmal way, until we reached the hacienda. In the laughter created by this race, we had not observed the commotion which our approach had excited. We were at first mistaken for a party of mounted ladrones; but as soon as we were distinctly made out, all alarm subsided, and the proprietor of the estate, a tall, courteous man, advanced to welcome us. Dismounting, we left our blown horses with the mozos, under the broad corridor, and entered the house. One half of the grand sala was filled with tobacco in bales, from the plains of Santa Rosa, in the interior, on its way to El Tigre, to be shipped, via Cape Horn, for Holland!

We had not been long seated, before a young lady, of great intelligence of face, grace, and benignity of manner, and dressed in American style, entered the room. The proprietor introduced her as his daughter, who, in consequence of her mother's death, was now his housekeeper. She conversed with us readily, and I soon discovered that she had been well educated, and had travelled with her father both in the United States and in Europe.

The conversation turned upon the present political disturbances, and we learned that General Guardiola, the night previously, had reached the village of Pespire, only two leagues from Nacaome, and that probably he would attack the place that very day. In fact, our host told me his valuables were already packed, and his horses saddled for flight into San Salvador, the moment the sound of guns should announce that all negotiations and attempts at compromise had failed. But I asked, if you leave, what will become of your property here? "It will be robbed," was the prompt

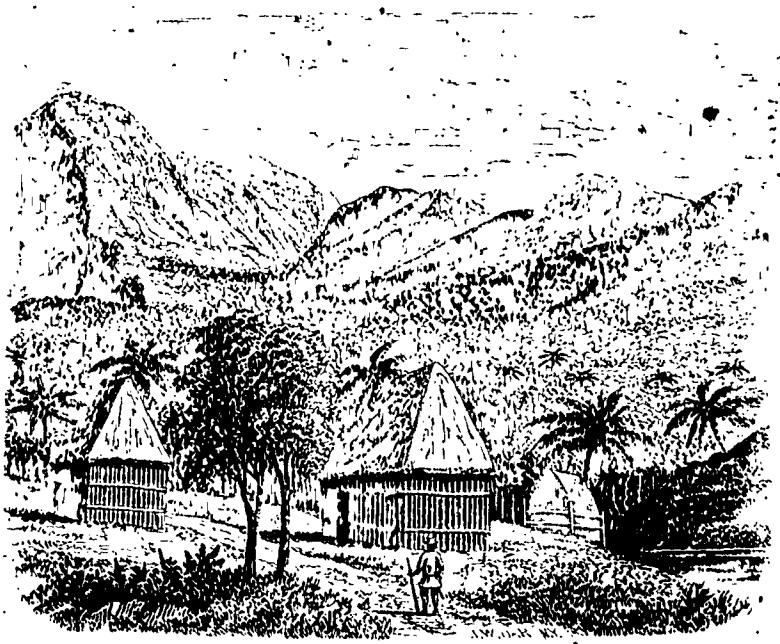
reply, "but not for the first time; the estate has been three times pillaged within the past six years!"

I shuddered to think what might be the fate of the gentle girl before us, if, when the worst came to the worst, her father's plans of escape should fail him. She said she only wished that matters would take some decisive turn; the sternest reality were better than this painful suspense. She did not care for herself, (and she pointed significantly to the hilt of a poignard concealed in her belt,) she had little to choose between life and death, except for the sake of her father and her motherless sisters.

It was yet two leagues to Nacaome, and knowing the reputation of General Guardiola for impetuosity, I felt that the object of my visit could only be accomplished, if at all, by reaching the scene of action before any collision should take place. Our host was positive that the day would not pass without a battle. We accordingly mounted, and advanced as rapidly as our miserable horses enabled us. A little distance beyond the hacienda, the road struck again into the narrow valley of the river; and as we were now beyond the alluvions, and entering the mountains, it assumed all the appearance of a mountain stream. In fact, the whole scenery had changed, and was unlike that of any part of the country we had yet seen. The stones around us were rich in copper, and interspersed with quartz, and the granite outcrops here and there showed that we had reached the region of primitive rocks. The mountains were no longer isolated peaks, but took the form of continuous ranges, and made broad sweeps in the distance. The river too, here murmuring amongst the stones, there spreading out in broad, dark pools, reminded us of the upper tributaries of the Hudson.

We passed several houses, occupied only by women; the men had either joined the army, or had fled to the hills to escape the conscription. About a league from the hacienda, we met a man, splendidly mounted, with long hair, and a

wild, bandit contour generally, who was riding express to the Port of La Union, with despatches from the commander of the San Salvadorean allies in Nacaome. He was known to some of our party as "Diablo Negro," Black Devil, and



MOUNTAIN SCENERY IN HONDURAS.

had a twin brother who rejoiced under the hardly less objectionable designation of "Diablo Blanco," White Devil. These twin devils were noted in the country as men of unbounded activity and daring, and their titles were intended to be complimentary. Diablo Negro told us that an Indian runner, despatched by our official friend, had reached Nacaome before he had left,—and that the army was ready to receive us upon one side, and Guardiola on the other. And then he laughed outright at his own observation, which he

evidently thought was witty. The rebels, he said, were advancing, and if we rode fast we might witness an "escaramuza," or scrimmage, such as it would do our souls good to see; and with a wild laugh, Diablo Negro struck spurs into his horse, and dashed off for La Union.

The valley widened as we progressed, and soon a grand amphitheatre, encircled by hills, opened before us. Upon an eminence in the centre stood the town of Nacaome, the white walls of its houses and the stuccoed tower of its principal church looking like silver beneath the noonday sun. A single glance revealed to us the capabilities of the position for defence, and explained why it had been chosen as a final stand point by the Government. We could distinctly see that the roof of the church was covered with soldiers, and martial music reached our ears, subdued by distance, but yet having a wonderfully earnest and ominous sound. Our official friend, who was in advance, stopped for a moment and listened with an attentive but troubled air, and then rejoining us, begged that we would move on slowly, and allow him to ride ahead and ascertain what was the cause of the peculiar activity of the garrison. I could see that he thought Guardiola was about making an attack, and was anxious not to involve us in the confusion, not to say danger, of a battle. We agreed to await his return in a little hollow, a short distance in advance. He thanked us, and galloped towards the town. Matters now appeared coming to a crisis, but we had gone too far to think of receding; besides, our horses were used up, and would make a sorry show with Guardiola's lancers at their heels! Our Nicaragua servants were pale and silent, and I vainly attempted to rally them into good spirits. It was all very well for us to be merry, they said; we were in no danger; but Guardiola would make no ceremony with them, and the spokesman shuddered as he drew his hand across his throat, by way of

commentary on his own observations. They seemed somewhat re-assured when Ben unfolded our flag, but yet kept religiously in the rear, ready to run at the first appearance of danger.

We waited in the hot sun for our official friend to return, until we were tired, and then moved on again towards the town. No sooner had we emerged from the hollow, however, than we encountered a large cavalcade of officers, full uniformed and mounted on splendid horses. Amongst them was a plainly dressed, unpretending man, to whom we were introduced as Señor Lindo, President of Honduras. He was of middle age, but looked care-worn and prematurely old. With him was Gen. Cabañas, and a large proportion of that devoted band of officers associated with Gen. Morazan in his last gallant, but unsuccessful, struggle to preserve the old Federation. I had heard much of Gen. Cabañas, his generosity, bravery, and humanity, and observed him with deep interest. He is a small, pale man, forty-five or fifty years of age, with a singularly mild face, and gentle, almost womanly, manners. Yet beneath that unassuming, retiring exterior, there slumbers a spirit which no disaster can depress, nor opposition subdue. For fifteen years he has been conspicuous in the political affairs of the country; yet his deadliest foes cannot point to a single one of his acts during that long, anarchical period, tainted with selfishness, or influenced by hatred or revenge. I could not help thinking that, in more favored lands, and other fields of action, his noble qualities might have won for him a name distinguished amongst those whom the world delights to honor.

Gen. Cabañas was now in command of the San Salvadorean allies, and had under him, as aid, the sole surviving son of his benefactor and friend, Morazan. He was a handsome youth, of noble bearing, and a frank, open expression of face,—a perfect type, it is said, of his father. He spoke English fluently, and at once explained to us the posture of

affairs. Guardiola's advance was already within sight, and a detachment had been thrown forward to meet them, under command of Gen. Barrios. It was this movement which had attracted our attention, and alarmed our conductor.

A short ride brought us to the suburbs of the town. The huts were all closed and deserted. Those within musket-shot of the plaza had their walls for several feet above the ground knocked away, so as to prevent their use by assailants for purposes of protection or concealment. The plaza itself was barricaded, with embrasures for cannon, which were so stationed as to sweep the streets leading to it. The sole entrance was by a covered way, so narrow as to admit the passage of but a single horseman at a time. The troops were all under arms, and the defences were fully manned, but by as motley an array of soldiers as it is possible to conceive. They received us, nevertheless, with prolonged vivas, and altogether seemed to be in high spirits. There was a kind of pleasurable excitement in the mere presence of danger, in which I must own I could not resist sympathizing.

We dismounted, and were ushered into the sala of a large house, fronting the church, and which had evidently belonged to a family of some wealth. But it was deserted, and destitute of furniture, excepting some tables and chairs, and one or two other articles, too heavy to be removed with ease.

We had hardly got seated, and the usual formulas of an official reception were not yet concluded, when a gun was fired on the opposite side of the plaza, followed by the rapid beat of a drum, and the cry of "to arms! to arms!" We started to our feet simultaneously, and the next instant an officer entered and announced that a party of Guardiola's horse had eluded the scouts, and had already entered the town. Señor Lindo hurriedly bade us be under no alarm, begged us to excuse him for an instant, and in less time than I am writing it, we were left wholly alone. A moment after-

wards, we heard the clear, firm voice of Gen. Cabañas, and going to the door, I saw him mounted on his horse in the centre of the plaza, giving his orders coolly and deliberately, as if engaged in a review. The men stood at the barricades three deep; the matches of the gunners were lighted; and an attacking party was sallying rapidly by the only gate, to cut off the assailants. Having been accustomed to regard a Central American army of new levies as little better than a mob, I was surprised to see the order, rapidity, and alacrity with which every movement was conducted, and was rather anxious, on the whole, to know how the motley fellows would fight, if driven to extremity. But it was soon apparent that we were not to be favored just then with anything beyond the excitement of preparation. For while we were helping ourselves to the contents of a box of claret and some bread and cheese, which the President, notwithstanding the bustle, had found time to send us, wondering why the performance did not commence, and speculating on the probable result, if Guardiola had really eluded the advance, and surprised the town—a young officer presented himself, bearing Gen. Cabañas's compliments, and the information that the alarm had been occasioned by a petty detachment of lancers, who had entered the surburbs in mere bravado; that half of them had been captured on the spot, and that the rest were in full retreat, with a troop of the Government cavalry close at their heels.

Not long after, the President and his Secretary returned, and I learned that Commissioners had already been sent to Guardiola, with a view of disabusing him of certain errors into which he had fallen, and procuring his peaceable submission to the Government. The intervention of San Salvador, and if necessary of Nicaragua also, the President thought, would materially influence the conduct of the refractory General; but he feared, after all, that evil influences and counsels might prevail. It was clear that Guardiola had

been imposed upon by the Serviles of Guatemala, and without being conscious of it, was in fact made use of by them, and their foreign coadjutors, to prevent Honduras from entering into the proposed new confederation. Señor Lindo showed me a letter from a man named Pavon, Secretary to the British Charge d'Affaires, Mr. Chatfield, addressed to a confederate, then under arrest for treason, in which the whole plot of the Servile faction was unfolded. This letter had been entrusted to Admiral Hornby, commander of the British naval force in the Pacific, now on board the Asia, eighty-four, in the Port of La Union, and by him had been inadvertently sent to the Government. Mr. Pavon congratulated his friend that matters were taking a decided turn against what he was pleased to call "the false American principles [i. e. of union], so industriously promulgated by the Representative of the United States;" and after complacently intimating that the British "Admiral goes to La Union, *well instructed* by Mr. Chatfield," he proceeded to say, "I think that his arrival there will bring the revolution to a favorable close!" But whether Mr. Pavon told the truth when he added, "Mr. Chatfield is at this moment writing to the Admiral, but charges me to salute you in his behalf, and to say that all which this contains meets his approbation," is a matter between himself and his principal. The President was naturally very indignant to find that the British Legatine was the centre of the intrigues and plots which distracted the State; and spoke with feeling of the attempt, made at this juncture, by the "well instructed" British Admiral, to coerce the State into a compliance with demands of doubtful validity, and the surrender of territorial rights, in violation alike of justice and the constitution. He very naturally conceived that this rude and hostile intervention was designed to favor the insurgents, and procure the substitution of a more manageable government than now existed.

The demands of the British Admiral were certainly very

extraordinary. It appeared that Honduras had, some months before, delegated a commissioner for a specific purpose, to the State of Costa Rica. While there, this commissioner fell in with the British Charge d' Affaires and his industrious Secretary, who, between them, prevailed upon him to sign a treaty, providing, amongst other things, for the qualified cession of portions of the territory of Honduras to Great Britain. The commissioner had no power to treat with the British Representative, and the latter knew perfectly well that no arrangement with him could be in any way binding upon Honduras. In fact, the commissioner never presumed to communicate the so-called treaty to his Government; and the first official knowledge the President had of it, was a copy enclosed to him by the British Admiral, with a demand for its immediate ratification, under threats of blockades and territorial seizures in case of refusal!

The reply of the Government was courteous, but decided: it wholly declined to ratify or in any way acknowledge the acts of the commissioner, who had not only proceeded without authority, but had assumed the exercise of powers prohibited by the constitution, for which he had now been arrested, and would be tried on a charge of treason! These things may appear incredible, yet they are not only true, but a fair illustration of the whole course of British policy in Central America. It is proper to add, that, at the outset, the Admiral was probably unaware of the nature of the fraud which was attempted; for after the explanations of the Government, he seems to have permitted the whole matter to drop.

While I was occupied in examining the papers connected with these extraordinary proceedings, Don Victorino Castellano, an influential citizen of San Salvador, who had been delegated as a commissioner to Guardiola, for the purpose of procuring his submission, returned with the gratifying intelligence that there was every prospect of success; that Guardiola had called back his advance, and agreed upon a

total suspension of hostilities for three days, to give time for a definite adjustment of differences. He, in fact, brought with him the outline of the terms upon which the General was willing quietly to lay down his arms, and disband his men, *viz.:* a general amnesty, and the immediate convocation of the State Legislature, to act upon certain alleged grievances in the internal administration, and particularly upon the pending plan of Federation. The last stipulation was made by the General with the evident purpose of relieving himself from the odium of favoring the predominant, but most artfully concealed purpose of his late Servile allies.

I was satisfied, from the moderate nature of these demands, that all danger of a collision was now over, and that my services "to keep the peace" would be no longer required. I therefore determined to retrace my steps to the Bay, and proceed on my proposed trip to San Salvador. This determination was received by our Nicaraguan attendants with a satisfaction bordering on ecstacy, and they would have saddled the horses, and started at once. But the day was intensely hot, and I preferred to ride to San Lorenzo by moonlight.

At four o'clock, Gen. Cabañas sent us a very fair dinner, and after it was despatched, we ascended the tower of the church, to witness the evening review. This church is a large, quaint structure, with a fine altar, and some dim, old paintings on the walls, which looked as if they might have hung there for centuries. From the tower we obtained a full view of the surrounding country. As I have said, Nacaome is a place of some three or four thousand inhabitants, clean, and very well built, and situated upon an eminence in the midst of a broad amphitheatre, shut in on every side by mountains. To this great natural circus there is but one entrance and exit, by the narrow winding valley of the river, which almost encloses the town in its embrace. It appears to constitute two distinct streams, and from this circumstance

it may derive its name, which, in the Mexican language, signifies *two bodies*, i. e., double stream. The town is situated on the camino real, leading to Tegucigalpa and Comyagua, the principal cities of the interior, and derives some of its importance from that circumstance. It is also very well supported by the adjacent country, which is fertile, and under what, in Central America, may be called tolerable cultivation.

From the tower we could discover many hattos, surrounded by small patches of plantains and yucas; pictures of primitive simplicity, and suggestive of unbounded rural delights. But the huts were all deserted; their owners were fugitives in the mountains; and, excepting a troop of lancers, with their weapons flashing in the sun, it might have been a painted scene, in its total absence of life and action.

The review, which took place just outside of the town, afforded an agreeable relief to the contemplation of this picture, so lovely and luxuriant, yet so deserted and lonely. When the men were paraded, I was surprised at their number, and wondered where they had been kept concealed. There were between two and three thousand,—as motley a set as can well be imagined; and, with the exception of about four hundred "veteranos" from San Salvador, dressed in accordance with their individual tastes. Some had shirts, and others jackets, but many had neither; and although I believe all had breeches, yet the legs of those breeches were of all lengths, generally reaching but a little below the knee. There were wags amongst them also, who, probably for the sake of completing the diversity, had one leg rolled up and the other let down. There were the tall, sandalled Caribs from northern Honduras, grim and silent, side by side with the smaller and more vivacious Indians of San Salvador. There were Ladinos and Mestizos, whites and negroes, constituting a living mosaic, as unique as it was unparalleled by anything which I had ever before seen. To those accus-

tomed to the well equipped and uniformed soldiery of other countries, this display would have been but little better than a broad caricature. It certainly afforded none of the "pomp and circumstance" of war, and would have made a very indifferent figure in Broadway or Hyde Park. But if brought to encounter the realities of war, weary marches, exposure, hunger, and privations of every kind, the disparity would not be so great. For these men will march, under a tropical sun, forty, fifty, and even sixty miles a-day, with no other food than a plantain and a bit of cheese; sleep, unprotected, on the bare ground, and pass, unimpaired, through fatigues which would destroy an European army in a single week. Military success depends more upon these qualities than upon simple bravery in battle. But in this respect the soldiers of Central America are far from deficient. When well officered, they fight with obstinacy and desperation. In their encounters with the Mexican troops sent against them by Iturbide, they proved themselves the better soldiers, and were almost universally successful, whatever the odds against them. The cruelties, barbarous massacres, and wholesale slaughters which have marked many of their struggles amongst themselves, have been rather due to the character of their leaders than to any natural or innate bloody disposition of the people themselves. Gen. Cabañas told me that he had never any difficulty in restraining the passions of his men; and to the credit of that officer be it said, that none of his victories have been disgraced by those atrocities which have been, unfortunately, the rule, rather than the exception, in Central America.

It was evening; the moon was shining brightly on the façade of the principal church of Nacaome, bringing in relief the gaunt, old statues of the saints which filled its various niches; the band was playing the national air on the terrace in front, and the men, relieved from duty, were reclining in groups around the plaza, and all appeared peaceful and

cheerful, when our horses were led to our door. President Lindo was urgent that I should stay; but convinced that I could be of no further service, and that our presence would materially incommode him, I persisted in my purpose of departure. A party of lancers was deputed to accompany us; and bidding our friends farewell, and "un buen exito" to their campaign, we defiled through the silent streets, on our return. I observed, however, as we rode along, that notwithstanding the apparent favorable disposition of Guardiola, Gen. Cabañas had relinquished none of his precautions. Treachery had been the vice from which he had suffered most, and beneath which the Republic had fallen. We accordingly found picquets stationed all about the town, and were more than once startled by "quien vive?" from parties concealed in the chaparral which bordered our road.

I halted, for a moment, at the hacienda where we had stopped in the morning; and experienced a real delight in relieving the proprietor of a part of the anxiety and suspense under which he was laboring. His daughter pressed my hand thankfully when I left; her heart was too full for utterance, but her face expressed more plainly than words the strength of that filial feeling which finds its highest pleasure in the solace of a parent's cares.

The heat, excitement, and exertion of the day had greatly fatigued us; and as we trotted slowly over the plain, which I have already described, I was overcome with an insurmountable drowsiness, and falling asleep, actually rode, in that state for nearly its whole length. I was only awakened by a sharp blow on my head, from an overhanging limb of a tree, just as we entered the thickly wooded valley of the river. Half an hour more brought us to our bongo, which, though far from affording luxurious accommodations, was yet, just now, a most welcome retreat. I lost no time in creeping under the chopa, and in five minutes was wrapped in deep and dreamless slumber.

CHAPTER XXIV.

LA UNION—OYSTERS—AMERICAN BOOKS—CHIQUIRIN—FRENCH FRIGATE "LA SERIEUSE"—ADMIRAL HORNBY OF THE ASIA 84—FRENCH AND ENGLISH WAR VESSELS—ASCENT OF THE VOLCANO OF CONCHAGUA—A MOUNTAIN VILLAGE—PECULIARITIES OF THE INDIANS—LAS TORTILLERAS—VOLCANO OF SAN MIGUEL—FIR FORESTS—AN ANCIENT VOLCANIC VENT—THE CRATER OF CONCHAGUA—PEAK OF SCORIÆ—VIEW FROM THE VOLCANO—ENVELOPED IN CLOUDS—PERILOUS DESCENT—YOLOLTOCA—PUEBLO OF CONCHAGUA AGAIN—AN OBSEQUIO—INDIAN WELCOME—SEMANA SANTA—DEVILS—SURRENDER OF GUARDIOLA—SAN SALVADOR—ITS CONDITION AND RELATIONS.

WHEN morning broke, we were entering the inner bay of La Union, above which towers the great volcano of Amapala, or Conchagua. Between us and the shore, at the road of Chiquirin, where a clear mountain stream comes down from the volcano, and forms a little bay, were the British ship-of-the-line "Asia," of 84 guns, and the French frigate "La Sérieuse." The first was there on the usual semi-annual visit, for enforcing trumpery claims, and the second to watch the "Asia" and the course of events in this quarter. Its officers and crew, although it was scarcely daylight, were engaged in making soundings, and other observations on the depth, capacity, etc., of the Bay.

The Bay was still, and two hours of steady pulling brought us in front of La Union, which is a small place, deriving its entire importance from being the port of the city of San Miguel, twelve leagues in the interior, and the most impor-

tant commercial point in all Central America. Excepting three or four large bodegas or ware-houses, close to the water, belonging to the Government, and devoted to the reception of goods in bond, there was not a single object worthy of remark in the place. It nevertheless had an air of thrift; and a long dock or pier, then under construction, and designed to facilitate the landing and shipping of cargoes, showed that there was here rather more enterprise than we had yet discovered in the country.

Col. Casceris, the Commandante, had made us out with his glass, and was on the dock, together with my old friends, Dr. Drivon and Mons. Mercher, to receive and welcome us. He was a fine appearing officer, accomplished in manner, and in his tasteful undress uniform of dark green, might have been taken for an American. He had the good sense to omit parading his little garrison, and led us at once to his house, the best in the place, where we were introduced to his wife, Doña Maria, a tall, intellectual, well educated woman, whose cordial welcome made us quite at home. This lady, during my stay, was unremitting in her kindnesses, and, with her two sweet little daughters, has left an impression upon my mind as pleasing as it is ineffaceable.

The apartments which were assigned to me bore the best evidences that our host and hostess were far above the common mark, in point of education and accomplishments. A piano and a variety of music books occupied a part of the sala, and in my private chamber was a library well stocked with standard works; amongst them I observed Prescott's Mexico, Irving's Columbus, Cooper's Spy, a translation of Livingston's Code, and Spanish Lives of Washington and Dr. Franklin. The "Espy," of the lamented Cooper, I may mention, seems to be better known in Spanish America than any other work in the English language. I found it everywhere; and when I subsequently visited the Indian pueblo of Conchagua, the first alcalde produced it from an obscure corner of the ca-

bildo, as a very great treasure. He regarded it as veritable history, and thought "Señor Birch" a most extraordinary personage, and a model guerillero.

Dr. Drivon, who had recently returned from California, in high disgust, was established at the Doña Antonia's, but a square distant; and as he had often praised the oysters found in the Bay of Fonseca, I hinted to him, before we had fairly got ashore, that I was ready to pass judgment on them. Fortunately, the Indians had brought in a fresh supply that morning, and he sent round a sack-full, which were served for breakfast. They were small, compact, and salt, and we ate them with the utmost relish. All hands concurred in saying that they were quite equal to the best "New-Haveners," and the value of the Gulf of Fonseca became straightway doubled in our eyes. And then they were so cheap! As many as a man could carry for a *medio*, or six cents! We had them three times a day while we stayed in La Union, and before we left, I instructed the Doña Maria in the mysteries of pickling them, and she kindly sent me a little jar, by the Government courier, every week during the whole of the time I remained in the country. The oysters at all other places on the coast are large, soft, and insipid. Why they should differ so widely here, is a question for naturalists; I vouch only for the fact.

During the afternoon we were waited upon by the Lieutenant of "La Sérieuse," with an invitation from the commander to visit his frigate, which we agreed to do on the following day, and accordingly, next morning we set out, accompanied by a guide and Mons. Mercher. This gentleman had been an officer under the Empire, and had resided in this country for thirty years, without becoming a whit less a Frenchman, and was just as ready to hurrah for a President as an Emperor, so that thereby he went against England and British aggrandisement, and for the glorification of "la belle France!" I had the Commandante's own horse, a

noble animal, full of spirit, but so gentle that a child could manage him. M., as usual, set the town in a roar, by tumbling from his mule in the principal street; a feat which, by constant practice, he had come to perform without suffering any damage. It was twelve miles by water to Chiquirin, where the vessels were anchored, but only six overland. Our road was nothing more than a mule path, skirting the bluff shores, and winding over the broken spurs of the volcano, amongst stones and rocks, and fallen trees, which it at first seemed impossible to surmount. After a wild scramble, we reached some ranchos in the woods, which were called the Pueblecita de Chiquirin, where we could hear the thunder of the surf below us. We now descended rapidly, and soon came upon a broad, sandy beach, skirting a small harbor, within which the "Asia" and "La Sérieuse" were anchored. A bright mountain stream, leaping amongst the black rocks, here plunged into the harbor, and on its banks, beneath the tall trees, the crew of the Asia had erected a temporary forge. One party of sailors was filling water-casks, and another was engaged in towing off some cows to the ships; altogether it was a busy and exhilarating scene. We were descried from "La Sérieuse," and in a few minutes the Captain came in his gig to conduct us on board. We embarked with some difficulty; for, although the little bay is well sheltered from winds, it is so near one of the entrances of the Gulf, that the lateral swell is hardly less than the direct. We spent some hours on board the frigate, which was a model of neatness and order. The armament comprised all the latest improvements, and the crew was composed entirely of young and vigorous men. After a lunch, which was despatched with patriotic and fraternal accompaniments on both sides, I concluded an arrangement with the Captain touching an ascent, the following day, to the bare summit of the volcano, which pierced the clouds above our heads.

I thought it but civil to pay the Admiral a visit, and so waving all etiquette, and the captain favoring me with his boat, I started, under the prescribed salute, for the Asia. The Admiral received us cordially; and conducted us into his cabin, where we found his wife and her sister, and two of the admiral's own daughters—all refined and accomplished ladies, with whom we spent a most agreeable hour. It was a real luxury to hear our mother tongue again, from a woman's lips—and I regretted that a previous engagement at La Union prevented me from accepting the Admiral's kind invitation to spend the night on board. The ladies were bitten with onithology, and had a most brilliant collection of stuffed, tropical birds, which they were anxious to augment. So it was agreed that they should come up some day of the week to La Union, where I engaged to provide prog and poultry for the party.

The Asia was a great, cumbersome vessel, overstocked with men and cows and chickens, and looked like a store ship. Its guns were of the ancient fashion, of light calibre, and as compared with the heavy 64's and 32's of "La Sérieuse," quite childish and behind the age. As I glanced through its decks, and contrasted its old, heavy, stupid-looking sailors with the young, quick, and intelligent crew of the Frenchman, I could not resist the impression that England's grasp on the trident was growing feebler every day, and that another war would wrest it from her hands for ever. The commercial marine of the United States now exceeds hers; her vessels are beaten in every sea in the peaceful rivalry of trade; and France is preparing, if indeed she is not prepared, to more than regain the glory lost at Trafalgar.

Admiral Hornby was, however, the model of the frank and hearty sailor; and although I thought it was very small business for one of Nelson's men, and a Knight of Bath, to be engaged in bullying the poor devil Governments of Central

America, threatening them with blockades and the Lord knows what else, if they did not prevent their editors from "reflecting generally and particularly on the British government,"[1] still, I was glad to meet him, and would have gone far out of my way to have done him a service. He was confounded by the politics of Central America, and well he might be. What little information he possessed, it was evident enough, had been derived from English agents in the country, who had resided here for many years, and had become as essentially partisans as any of the natives—sharing in local and personal hates and jealousies, and altogether burlesquing the offices which they filled. He had been instructed that it was his duty to be particularly severe upon Honduras, San Salvador, and Nicaragua, the only liberal States of the old Republic, and unfortunately the only ones which had good harbors and valuable islands to be seized in "behalf of Her Britannic Majesty." But thus far he had had but poor success in the objects of his visit. Nicaragua had replied to his notes by enclosing a copy of that article of its constitu-

[1] "A series of articles have appeared from time to time in the papers of Nicaragua, which reflect generally and particularly upon the British government, and its respectable representative, Mr. Chatfield, as also holding up the English nation, collectively and individually, to public indignation. Such language is improper and unjust, and I bring it thus officially before your government, believing that it will make use of its influence over the public press to restrain, in future, *all offences* of this nature. * * It is my intention to return to this port in a few days, when I expect to find a satisfactory answer to this communication."—*Rear Admiral Hornby, to the Sect. of State of Nicaragua, March* 19, 1850.

"The press of Nicaragua has not held up the British nation collectively or individually to public indignation, unless by the simple announcement of such acts as have been committed in the port of San Juan, in the island of Tigre, and elsewhere. Nothing can be cited in proof of your charge; and the Supreme Director regrets, Sir, that you should counsel him to commit an unlawful act, by attacking the *liberty of the press*, which is guarantied in the most solemn manner by the constitution of the State."—*Reply of Señor Salinas, Sect. of State, March* 31, 1850.

tion guarantying the liberty of the press; Honduras had flatly refused to have an unconstitutional treaty crammed down its throat; and San Salvador had with equal decision declined to recognize an obnoxious citizen, who claimed to be British Vice Consul, under a commission from Mr. Chatfield. And in the end, the Admiral had to take his departure, without having achieved anything beyond deepening the hatred towards the British government—a hatred, unfortunately too well founded, and the necessary result of a long series of insults and aggressions.

Our return to La Union was unmarked by a single incident worthy of record, except the unsolicited presence of a couple of pumas, for a moment, in our path; and the evening was devoted to preparations for ascending the volcano. At about nine o'clock the Captain of "La Sérieuse" arrived, and next morning, long before daylight, accompanied by a soldier of the garrison carrying an immense alforgas, prepared by the Doña Maria, we set out. We were not long in passing through the town, and the chaparral which surrounds it; and then, striking into a dark and ragged ravine, we commenced the ascent. As day dawned, I observed with surprise that the path was broad and smooth; and we now began to meet numbers of Indians, men and women, laden with fruit, corn, and other commodities, coming down from the volcano. I was greatly puzzled to account for any population in these rocky fastnesses, when the path turned suddenly up the almost precipitous banks of the ravine, and we found ourselves, a league and a half from the port, in the Indian Pueblo of Conchagua. Its site is most remarkable. Here is a broad, irregular shelf on the volcano's side, the top, if I may so speak, of a vast field of lava, which, many ages ago, flowed downward to the sea. This shelf is covered with rocks thrown together in rough and frowning heaps, to make room for the dwellings of the inhabitants, which are half hidden by these rude pyramids. We wound some minutes through the crooked

streets, and then reached the plaza, a large area, in the centre of which stands a low, picturesque church, built some time in the seventeenth century. We could scarcely comprehend that in a land of broad, fertile, and well-watered plains, a spot like this, rugged, sterile, and without a single fountain, should have been selected as the residence of any human being, much less of an entire community of two or three thousand souls. Nothing but purposes of protection and defence could account for the circumstance; and although a village may have existed here before the Conquest, yet I am disposed to credit the vague tradition which I afterwards heard, that a great portion of these Indians formerly lived where La Union now stands, and on the islands of the Gulf, and subsequently fled to this secluded spot to avoid the cruelty of the bucaneers, who, from 1650, for more than half a century, infested these shores. Here they seem resolved to remain, although every drop of water for their use, except that caught from the clouds during the rainy season, has to be brought for more than a league. The Government of San Salvador has offered every inducement to them—lands, exemption from taxation, and other privileges—to settle at the port, but they have steadily refused.

Although it was not yet sunrise, the town was active; and the whole female population was busy with its task of grinding and preparing tortillas for breakfast. Through the open doorways we caught glimpses of the inmates at their work, as cheerful and contented there, on the barren mountain side, as when the whole broad land was their own, and from these rugged heights they offered their adorations to the monarch Sun, the glorious emblem of their God.

Little patches of plantains, and some palm and fruit trees occupied the narrow spaces between the heaps of rocks and the huts, and completed a picture of primitive life, not less striking and beautiful, though less luxuriant, than that of Nindiri. Our presence created quite a sensation; and,

fearful of an obsequio, I hurried our guide, and passed rapidly through the village. Beyond, the road was more broken, and hundreds of paths diverged from it in every direction. We soon came to clearings for purposes of cultivation.

"LAS TORTILLERAS."

Wherever there were a few square yards of soil, the trees and bushes had been removed, and maize had been planted. There were also some considerable openings, covered with stumps and fallen trees, resembling those which the traveller constantly encounters on our frontiers. They recalled to mind my border rambles, thousands of miles to the northward; but I listened in vain for the solitudes to echo back the clear, ringing blows of the settler's axe.

All around us were huge volcanic rocks, and we wound for two hours through labyrinthine ravines, dark with trees, constantly ascending, but yet unable to see beyond the tangled verdure of the forest. Finally, however, the trees became fewer, and at eight o'clock we had emerged beyond the forests, and stood upon the grassy, scoriaceous slope of the volcano. And although the summit seemed more dis-

tant than ever, yet our position overlooked an almost interminable expanse of country. The Bay of La Union was mapped at our feet, and we could trace its esteros, gleaming like silver threads, amidst the level, green alluvions. To our left was the broad valley of San Miguel, but it was concealed from view by a mist, like an ocean of milk, above which, island-like, to mid-heaven, towered the great volcano of San Miguel—with the exception of Ometepec, the most regular in its outlines of any in Central America. From its summit rose a plume of white smoke, opalescent in the sun.[1]

We halted for a quarter of an hour in silent admiration, and then resumed our course. We were on one of the bare ribs of the volcano, with deep ravines on either side, up which the forests, reduced to a narrow line of trees, extended for some distance farther. These spurs or ribs of the mountain are covered with long, coarse grass, which gives them an appearance of great smoothness; but it only conceals sharp, angular rocks, and a treacherous scoriaceous soil. Our path here, therefore, was more toilsome than in the forest; and as we advanced, the mules suffered greatly. I had given the Captain his choice of animals at the start, and he had selected a large, sleek, gentle mule, leaving me a little, black macho, a villanous hard trotter, vicious, but tough as iron. The Captain had kept ahead while we had a path, and seemed to have it very comfortable; but now, when the ascent commenced in earnest, the black macho left

[1] The port of La Union is forty-five miles distant, in a right line, from the volcano of Coseguina, and on the occasion of its eruption, was deserted by the entire population, who fled in dismay to San Miguel. The darkness was so great that they were obliged to carry torches, which, however, gave no light, except for two or three yards around them. The terrified inhabitants, some on foot and others mounted, were followed by their equally terrified cattle, and even wild beasts, tame with fear, joined in the unearthly procession, while birds lit upon the travellers in affright, and would not be driven away.

him far behind. The Captain spurred, and whipped, and "sacre'd" in vain; his mule finally came to a dead halt. We were now at the head of the ravines, whence the cone of the volcano rose sheer and regular as the pyramids. Upon one side of our path, and five or six hundred feet below us, was a belt of tall and beautiful fir trees, amongst which we discovered, with our glasses, a party of Indians collecting branches, wherewith to decorate the streets and churches, during the Semana Santa. As we acsended, we had startled many deer, and numbers of them now stood, with heads elevated and ears thrown forward, contemplating us from a distance. There were also hundreds of wild turkeys, and while the Captain was resting his mule, I pursued a flock of them, and killed two, with as many discharges of my pistol; no great feat, by the way, for they were so tame that I came within fifty feet of them.

Again we started, and now the narrow path wound zigzag up the face of the mountain, so that in riding along we could almost lay our hands on the turn next above us. I let my macho take his course, and he picked his way as unconcernedly as if traversing a plain. I only feared that the indurated scoriæ might give way beneath his feet, and I shuddered, as I glanced down the steeps, to think what would be the inevitable result. And thus we toiled on, slowly and painfully, winding up slopes which no human being could have ascended directly. Finally we reached a spot where, some time or other, there had been a slide of the earth, forming a narrow shelf; and here the Captain's mule again came to a dead halt. Whip nor spur could move him. Finally, however, I took hold of his halter, and succeeded in leading him into the narrow path, when he went on as before. At nine o'clock, we had reached the summit of the first peak, and stood upon the edge of a great funnel-shaped hollow, lined with grass, which had been an ancient vent. Its walls upon one side had been broken down, and we could see, far below,

the rough outlines of the lava current which had flowed from it into the ocean. There were a number of these vents at various points, but the crater was still above us. In half an hour we reached its edge, and wound down its ragged side to a broad plain at its bottom. It was an immense amphitheatre, walled with precipitous cliffs. The eastern side was elevated, and covered with a forest of beautiful pines; its western depressed, with a spring of water at its lowest part, surrounded with a variety of trees and vines, constituting a sort of jungle, much frequented, our guide told us, by wild beasts. The rest of the area was covered with grass, now sere and yellow from the long drought. It was a singular spot, with no horizon but the rocky rim of the crater, and no view except above, where the sun shone down blindingly from a cloudless sky. We stood still, and like the pulsations of the earth's great heart, we could hear the waters of the Pacific beating at the base of the mountain. I thought of a Milton prisoned here, face to face with heaven, listening to the deep utterances of the ocean, and striking the strings of his awful lyre, to the majestic measure of the sea!

"Let us go," said the Captain with a shudder; "this is terrible." We scrambled out of the crater on the side opposite from where we entered, towards a yet higher peak of scoriæ, connected by a narrow ridge with the body of the mountain. Upon that peak, whose feet were planted in the sea, the warder at the entrance of the Bay, there was a kind of look-out established by the Government, with a flagstaff, and a series of telegraphic signals, to convey intelligence to the port. This was the point which we were most anxious to reach, and from whence I anticipated being able to map out the entire Gulf. It may seem hardly possible, but the narrow ridge connecting the two peaks was barely wide enough for a mule path; it was like walking on the ridge of a house. The Captain refused to ride along it, and in order to keep him company, I also dismounted, and we pro-

ceeded on foot. It was past ten o'clock when we reached the summit of the peak; but although almost exhausted by our perhaps unnecessary exertions, we lost all sense of fatigue in the magnificence and extent of the prospect, which was bounded only by the great dividing ridge of the Cordilleras, looking like a faint cloud in the distance, upon one hand, and by the ocean horizon upon the other. The Gulf with its islands was revealed for its whole extent at a single glance, and it seemed as if we could almost look into the great Lake of Nicaragua, whose mountain-framed basin stretched away in illimitable perspective.

At the foot of the flag-staff was a little hut, half excavated in the earth, its roof heavily loaded with stones, to prevent it from being swept away by the winds. Here we found a man, a broad-shouldered, merry Indian, who was the watcher or sentinel, and who was greatly rejoiced to receive us. He had been "observador" here for six years, and we were the first *blancos* who had ascended during that period. And he produced his glass and made himself almost annoying in his zeal to point out to us the features of interest surrounding the Gulf.

Meantime our guide reached us, with the mules and the alforgas. Amongst our equipments was the flag of the United States, which was at once run up to the top of the signal post and answered from the port and the French frigate. "I accept the omen," said the Captain gravely, and as I then thought and still believe prophetically; "that flag will soon be planted here *en permanence*, the symbol of dominion over two seas, and of a power the greatest the world has ever seen."

The peak on which we stood seemed to have been formed in great part of scoriæ and other materials thrown out from the principal crater. It was a sharp cone, and the rounded summit was not more than sixty feet across. In fact, there was barely room for ourselves, the flag-staff, the hut, and

the mules. It was now midday, and the thermometer marked only 68° of Fahrenheit, while at the same hour it stood at 86° at the port, a difference of sixteen degrees.

We had been nearly six hours in ascending, and after the novelty of the scene was a little over, we got beneath the hut, and helped ourselves to the plentiful contents of our guide's alforgas, and then, without intending it, both fell asleep. I was awakened by the Captain, who looked pinched, and chilly, and rising, found myself uncomfortably cold. We crept outside; but in little more than an hour, everything had undergone a total change. Above and around us the sun was shining clearly, except when a thin rift of drizzling cloud, rapidly sweeping by, half-hid us from each other's view. But below and around us, there was only a heaving ocean of milky white clouds—now swelling upwards to our very feet, and then sinking down so as to reveal long reaches of the bare mountain side. A current of sea air, saturated with moisture, sweeping past, had encountered the volcano, and become partially condensed in its cooler atmosphere. I asked the observador if it was common, and he said it happened almost daily; but that sometimes the wind was not strong enough to sweep the mist away, and then he had sat here for hours, *muy triste*, very melancholy, in the gloom. It was then an excellent time to pray, he added, with a laugh.

In an hour the mists had dissipated, and the view was again unobstructed. And, having taken the bearings of the principal landmarks, the Captain and myself, with the aid of the observador and our guide, amused ourselves by loosening rocks, and starting them down the side of the cone. They went leaping down, dashing the scoriæ on all sides, like spray, in their bounds; and, when they reached the belt of forest, we could see the trees bow down before them like grass before the mower's scythe. One of these rocks, which we started with difficulty, must have weighed upwards of a ton;

and we afterwards learned that it had been dashed to pieces within only a quarter of a mile of the Bay of Chiquirin.

At three o'clock, the observador having volunteered to show us a better route, we started on our return. He took us by a path running laterally down the side of the ridge connecting the two peaks to which I have referred, so steep that we repented having undertaken it, but so narrow, at the same time, as to render turning about impossible. In places my macho braced his feet and slid down a hundred feet at a time. It was "neck or nothing." The Captain was behind, but how he got along I did not stop to inquire. It was one of those occasions when every man looks out for himself. After fifteen or twenty minutes of this kind of progress, my hair was less disposed to the perpendicular, and I began to have great faith in my macho. I was only nervous about my saddle girths.

In three-quarters of an hour, during which time we had descended more than two thousand feet, we reached the head of one of the principal ravines which furrow the mountain. Here was a narrow shelf, where was built the hatto of Juan, the observador, and where his family resided. Here, too, completely embowered amongst the trees, with a large reservoir, fifty feet long, cut by the ancients in the rock, was a copious spring, called Yololtoca; the ground all around it was paved with flat stones, and the approaches were protected by masonry. I was surprised to learn that it was from this spring that the inhabitants of Conchagua obtained now, as they had from time immemorial, their principal supply of water. It is fully two-thirds of the distance up the volcano, and more than a league from the town. While we stood beside the reservoir, to allow our mules to drink, a troop of girls came toiling up a flight of steps near by. They were from the village, and, like the aguadoras of Masaya, had little sacks strapped over their shoulders, wherein to carry

their water jars, when weary of supporting them on their heads.

After resting a few minutes, we continued our descent. The path was now wider and better, but in some places, where the feet of the aguadoras had worn narrow steps in the rock, which the mules were obliged scrupulously to follow, exceedingly difficult. An occasional fallen tree obstructed our course; over which we had great trouble in forcing our mules. But after a deal of excitement, and whipping and hallooing, half an hour before sunset, we once more reached the village of Conchagua. As we approached, we had observed a man, stationed on a high rock, with an immense rattle, like those anciently used by watchmen in our cities. The moment he saw us, he sprung it, and leaping down, from rock to rock, disappeared in the direction of the town. Nearing the plaza, we saw the result; men and women, all gayly dressed, were hurrying in that direction, and there was evidently great excitement. At first, as this was holy week, I thought some of its ceremonies were in progress; but when I saw a couple of alcaldes, with heads uncovered, and holding aloft their wands of office, advance to meet us, the awful truth that we had unwittingly fallen into the jaws of an obsequio, was forced upon me. The Captain rode up, in evident surprise, and inquired what I supposed the Indians wanted. I professed ignorance. Meantime the alcaldes had planted themselves in front of my macho, and one of them, without so much as "by your leave," had taken the bridle in his hands, while the other commenced reading an order of the municipality, felicitating the representative of the Great and Powerful Republic of El Norte on his arrival in the loyal Pueblo of Conchagua, and inviting him to a *convite*, which, he added in parenthesis, was then ready in the cabildo; and concluding with "Dios, Union, Libertad!" and "Viva la Republica del Norte!" In the latter the people all joined. I thanked

them in corresponding hyperbolical phrase, and then introduced to them my friend, the Captain, as an officer of another great Republic; whereupon they uttered another round of vivas,—not for the Republic of France, but "El Amigo del Ministro del Norte!" This over, we were marched, with an alcalde on each side, to the cabildo. It was a large building, with a mud floor, and a double row of benches extending around it, close to the wall. At one end was an elevated platform, upon which were three or four elaborately carved and antiquated chairs and a desk, where the alcaldes held their courts, and administered justice; and at the other end a pair of stocks, wherein refractory criminals were confined, when occasion required. Against the wall, above the seats of the alcaldes, hung the fragments of an ancient flag; but no one could tell me its history; it was "muy, muy antiguo!" very, very old.

In the centre of the apartment was a table for six; the Captain, the two principal alcaldes, the bastonero or marshal, the cura, and myself. This part of the obsequio was unobjectionable, and the distinguished guests performed their parts with spirit, and to the great admiration of the spectators. Commend me to an ascent of the volcano of Conchagua for an appetite! Before we had half finished, it grew dark, and a dozen boys holding torches were introduced and stationed on the alcalde's platform. There they stood like bronze statues, without moving, until we had finished. It was the most extraordinary meal of my life; and I experienced a singular sensation when I glanced around upon the swarthy, earnest faces of the Indians, rank on rank, only half revealed by the light of the torches, and reflected that here, in the volcanic fastnesses of San Salvador, amongst a people in whose veins not a drop of white blood flowed, the descendants of those who had fought against Cortez and Alvarado, the name of an American was not only a shield of security, but a passport to the rudest heart. It sounded

strangely to hear them talk of Washington as the political regenerator, not of his own country alone, but of the continent and the world.

We returned to La Union by moonlight. During the day my companions, according to arrangement, had started on their return to Nicaragua, and I was now left alone with Ben. I had determined to await here the result of affairs at Nacaome, from whence we had not as yet received any intelligence. That very night a reinforcement from San Miguel marched silently through the streets of La Union, and in less than half an hour were embarked on their way to San Lorenzo. It was a forced march, and the practical reply to the despatches borne by "Diablo Negro."

The day following was the holiest day of the Holy Week, and was ushered in with the firing of guns in the little plaza. The streets all wore their liveliest garb, and business of every kind was suspended. At nine o'clock the inhabitants all flocked to the church, whither I followed. But it was crowded to suffocation, and I was neither Christian nor curious enough to remain; accordingly I joined Dr. Drivon, at his rooms at the Doña Antonia's, from whence the whole out-door performances could be witnessed. At eleven o'clock the crowd emerged into the plaza, where a procession, preceded by some musicians, was formed. In advance went twenty or thirty men and boys, half naked, and painted in a frightful manner, each bearing a wooden spear; these were supposed to represent Jews, Moors, and Devils, who are all classed in the same pleasant category. They engaged in mimic fights, and dashed through the streets, clearing every living thing before the procession, and by their fantastic actions creating great merriment. Then followed twelve boys, some white and others dark, to represent the apostles, and two sweet little girls, dressed in gauze, personifying the Marys. Joseph of Arimathea, a meztizo, staggered beneath a heavy cross, and on a bier, borne by six young men, was

a wax figure representing Christ. Priests and chanters surrounded it, and a crowd of women and children, with palm branches, followed. The procession halted at every corner, while rockets were let off in the plaza. It was an incongruous, typical ceremony, allusive apparently to the crucifixion and burial of Christ. I asked Doña Antonia's son, who had been one of the apostles, on his return to the house, what it meant. "Oh, nothing," he replied briskly, "only Christ is dead, and we shall have no God for three days!" From this reply I inferred that it had produced no very lasting impression upon the minds of the apostles, whatever its effect upon the other participants.

Next morning I was roused at daylight by the firing of guns, but supposing that it only part of the fiesta, I went to sleep again. When I rose for breakfast, however, the Commandante placed in my hands an open letter from Gen. Cabañas, announcing the surrender of Gen. Guardiola, on substantially the basis before proposed, and the immediate dispersal of his troops. In less than one year after, Guardiola was in the field, as the aid of the President of San Salvador, against the very Serviles who had decoyed him into overt acts against his own government! Thus ended the disturbances in Honduras, which had, at one time, threatened to break up the proposed Union of the States, and, for the time, British and Servile policy were again crushed to earth.

The Admiral had already prepared to sail, and "La Sérieuse," was every way ready to follow, at a moment's warning. And although a deputation had arrived from San Miguel, to conduct me to that city, yet the principal object of my visit having been accomplished, I was anxious to return to Leon, which I did a day or two subsequently, having in the meantime made another trip to the island of Tigre, and completed the observations necessary to the construction of the Map of the Gulf of Fonseca, elsewhere presented.

I regretted much my inability to spend more time in San Salvador, which is, in many respects, the most interesting and important State of the five which composed the old federation. In territorial extent, it is the smallest, but it has a greater relative population than either of the others, and its people are better educated and more industrious. It has, from the first, been the stronghold of the Liberal party, and has constantly adhered, with heroic devotion, to the idea of Nationality. The restoration of the Republic of Central America is the grand object of its policy, and to this all other questions are regarded as subordinate. It has had frequent collisions with the agents of Great Britain, (who, without exception, are active Servile partisans,) but has always maintained itself with firmness and dignity. As a consequence, it has been grossly maligned, and its people held up as impersonations of perfidy and disorder. But there is no part of Central, nor of Spanish America, where individual rights are better respected, or the duties of republicanism better understood. Whatever the future history of Central America, its most important part, in all that requires activity, concentration, and force, will be performed by San Salvador.

CHAPTER XXV.

DEPARTURE FOR THE UNITED STATES—AN AMERICAN HOTEL IN GRANADA—LOS COCOS—VOYAGE THROUGH THE LAKE—DESCENT OF THE RIVER—SAN JUAN—CHAGRES—HOME—OUTLINE OF NICARAGUAN CONSTITUTION—CONCLUSION OF NARRATIVE.

In the month of June succeeding the events detailed above, having received leave of absence from my Government, I started from Leon on my return to the United States. It was the commencement of the rainy season, and already the vegetable world was putting on new robes of green. I found, as I rode from one town to another, that a year had wrought a wonderful change in the aspect of the country. The intervention of the United States, and the probable speedy opening of Californian transit, had contributed to restore public confidence, and had given a new impulse to industry. I observed that fully one-third more ground had been put under cultivation than the year previously, and that in other respects considerable improvements had been made.

In Granada an American hotel had been established, and I found that my old and excellent friend Dr. S. was no longer the sole representative of the United States in that hospitable city. I need not add that I took up my quarters at the "Fonda Americana." But my stay was brief. The novelty of a residence amongst orange and palm trees had quite worn off; life had become tame and monotonous; and I longed for the action and bustle of home. The *playa* of Granada was not less cheerful than when I landed; the

tropical winds were as bland, and the sun as brilliant. The Indians girls were not less arch, nor the languid Señoras less beautiful; the Señorita Terisa sang operas quite as well as before; but still there was a vacancy to be supplied. The essential element of vitality was wanting; and however much I had been taken at the outset with the primitive aspect of society, and the quiet, dreamy habits of the people, I was now more than ever convinced that life, to be relished, must be earnest, and that its highest and keenest enjoyments are involved in what is often called its "warfare."

Three days after my arrival in Granada, I embarked at "Los Cocos," in a bongo loaded with Brazil wood, for San Juan. We dawdled, day after day, along the northern shore of the lake, after the immemorial fashion amongst the marineros, stopped again at El Pedernal," and the Bahita de San Miguel, and on the morning of the sixth day reached San Carlos. My rotund friend, the Commandante, arrayed in a new uniform, and reinstated in his old quarters, welcomed me with all the warmth of his genial temper; and again I was installed, amongst the pigeons and chickens, in his house on the promontory.

I was impatient to proceed, but we did not get away until the sun was setting behind Salentenami, throwing a flood of radiance over the lake, while the river flowed dark and silent beneath the shadows of the dense forests on its banks. The descent of the San Juan is an easy matter compared with the ascent. It is usually accomplished in two days; but on the morning of our second day, our patron Antonio, in an attempt to "shoot" the central channel of the Rapids of Machuca, ran us upon the rocks, where we remained for thirty hours, until relieved by the united crews of six bongos, which, in ascending and descending, had, in the meantime, reached the rapids. Our situation during this time was perilous in the extreme, and had not our boat been new and staunch, it must inevitably have gone to pieces. After the

first excitement was over, I amused myself by shooting alligators, in their attempts to ascend the rapids. A dozen of their ugly heads might be seen above the water at the same moment. By keeping in the eddies, they contrive to get up, but it is a long process for them, and requires an entire day.

San Juan had undergone very little change since my previous visit. My friend, the Consul General, had gone home, and the supreme authority was vested in a little man named Green, one of those who, in conjunction with McDonald, Walker & Co., had invented the Mosquito Kingdom! The two wan policemen were also gone; one had absconded with a quantity of the Consul's papers, and the other, I believe, had died. Their place was now filled by a dozen negroes from Jamaica, not particularly prepossessing in their exteriors, or agreeable in their manners. Captain Shepherd still swung in his hammock, clinging tenaciously to his parchment grants; and Monsieur Sigaud, upright, honest-hearted Frenchman, was my host. His titled countryman, the Viscomte, oblivious of slaughtered pigs, had made his peace with the English authorities, and in conjunction with a German Jew, of doubtful antecedents, had now the control of the Custom House.

There was a large party of Americans in San Juan. They had brought the news of the ratification of the Clayton and Bulwer treaty, and the people were ecstatic under the belief that they were thereby to be relieved from British rule. But Dr. Green cooled their ardor by producing a letter from the Foreign office, in which the treaty was interpreted to be an implied if not an express recognition of the British establishments on the coast, by the American Government.

The British steamer Dee arrived in port the morning after my arrival. She stayed but a single day, and on the 26th of June, 1850, I bade farewell to the shores of Nicaragua.[1]

[1] I found in San Juan the crew of an American vessel, wrecked a short

Twenty-four hours brought us in sight of Chagres, where, beneath the old Castle of San Felipe, the "Georgia" and "Philadelphia," with steam already up, were taking on board their last passengers, for the United States. I had barely time to get my baggage on board the former, before the anchor was lifted, and we were under way, "homeward bound." A brief and pleasant passage of eight days to New York, offered a striking contrast to our month's imprisonment in the little "Frances," outward bound. The captain was right; that voyage to San Juan was really her "thirty-seventh and last," she was condemned on her return, and has probably gone "where all good vessels go." Peace to her venerable timbers!

* * * * * * * * *

The preceding rapid narrative of incidents connected with my residence in Nicaragua might be greatly extended; but so far as my principal purpose of conveying some idea of the geography, scenery, resources, and antiquities of the country, and of the character, habits, and actual situation of its people, is concerned, it is probably unnecessary to add anything to what I have already said. A few words in respect to the Government and present constitution of the country may not be unacceptable, and with these I shall close this portion of my work, and pass to the consideration of other, but collateral, subjects.

The dissolution of the Federal Republic of Central America, in 1838, left the various States which had composed it in a

time previously, in the vicinity of that port. They had barely escaped with their lives. As there was no American Consul to provide for their return home, I proposed some arrangement to the commander of the "Dee" for conveying them to Chagres. But he cut the matter short by offering them all a free passage. I have had but few opportunities, in this narrative, of saying good things of our English cousins in Central America; and I have therefore the more pleasure in mentioning this incident, illustrating the honorable reputation for generosity enjoyed by the British sailor.

singular and anomalous position. Some of them still adhered to the idea of nationality, but could not disguise the fact that the Federation no longer existed. Under those circumstances, they severally assumed the powers and responsibilities of independent sovereignties. Their respective constitutions, framed to conform to the federal system, now required to be altered to suit their new conditions. The Government of Nicaragua convened a Constituent Assembly for that specific purpose, which, on the 12th of November 1838, proclaimed a new constitution. It was accepted in due form by the people, and has since constituted the fundamental law of the State.

This instrument is thoroughly republican in its provisions. It provides that the Executive Power shall be vested in an officer styled the "Supreme Director," who is elected directly by popular vote, for the term of two years, but is ineligible for two consecutive terms. He must be a native of Central America, a resident for five years in the State, and have attained the age of thirty years. The legislative power is vested in an Assembly, composed of a Senate and House of Representatives. The Senate consists of two members from each of the six districts into which the State is divided; they must possess all the qualifications of the Supreme Director, besides actual property to the value of $1000. They hold their offices for four years, and are so classified that the term of office of one-fourth of the number expires annually. They are not eligible beyond two consecutive terms, nor can any ecclesiastic be elected to their body. The Representatives are apportioned on the basis of every twenty thousand inhabitants. They must have attained twenty-five years of age, have resided one year in the State, and may be either secular or ecclesiastic. They are eligible for only two consecutive terms. No officer in the employ of the Government can be elected to either branch of the Assembly; nor can any member accept a public appointment. The acts of this

Assembly require a vote of two-thirds of each branch, and the approval of the Supreme Director, in order to have the force of law. All males of the age of twenty years, born in the country, are electors. Exceptions are made in favor of married males and persons who have obtained a scientific degree or acquired a liberal profession. These secure the privileges of electors at the age of eighteen years. All persons convicted of criminal offences, who traffic in slaves or are privy to such traffic, or who accept employment, or titles, or pensions, from other Governments, forfeit their citizenship. This right is also suspended in certain cases, one of which is rather extraordinary. An individual who accepts the position of personal servant to another, is incapable, for the time being, of exercising his political privileges.

The rights of the citizen are defined to be "Liberty, Equality, Security of Life and Property, all of which are inseparable and inalienable, and inherent in the nature of man." Their preservation is declared to be the primary object of all society and government. "Every man is free, and can neither sell himself nor be sold by others." And although the Catholic religion is recognized by the State, and protected by the Government, yet all other religions are tolerated, and their free and public exercise guarantied. Entire liberty of speech and the freedom of the press are also guarantied, but individuals are subject to arraignment for their abuse. The right of petition, the principle of the inviolability of domicil, the security of seal, etc., etc., are recognized in their full extent, and are placed beyond the reach of the legislative or administrative powers.

The Judiciary consists of a Supreme Court, the members of which are named by the House of Representatives, and confirmed by the Senate, three in each department, who hold their offices for only four years, but are always eligible to re-election. One in each district is designated as Presid-

ing Judge; and the President Judges, meeting annually in the capital, constitute a Court of Appeals, or final resort.

In short, as observed at the outset, the whole spirit and all the provisions of this constitution are eminently republican. It displays a full knowledge of the duties and requirements of Government, and needs only to be faithfully administered to meet all the purposes of a sound political organization. If it does not do this, the causes of its failure lie elsewhere,—in the circumstances of the people.

When I arrived in the country, the Government was organized as follows:

Señor Don Norberto Ramirez, . . .	Supreme Director.
" " Sebastian Salinas, ...	Sect. of Foreign Relations.
" " Pablo Buitrago, ...	" of War.
" " Jose T. Munoz, ...	General in Chief.
" " Chavarria, ...	Treasurer.

And here I must be permitted to bear testimony, not only to the public zeal, the earnest and unselfish patriotism, and the unflagging spirit of these men, who, under the most depressed and adverse circumstances, threatened from abroad, and harrassed at home, nevertheless dedicated themselves fearlessly and faithfully to the interests and requirements of their country. Señor Ramirez had once filled the office of President of San Salvador. Moderate, yet firm, a Liberal from principle not interest, with large experience amongst men, a thorough practical education, joined to great simplicity and dignity of manners, he was a man eminently adapted to the post which he occupied. Señor Salinas had been long identified with Nicaragua; and had held the office of Secretary of Foreign Affairs during several administrations. His abilities are well exhibited in the discussions with the British diplomatic agents, in respect to the Mosquito shore. In argument, temper, and force, they compare favorably with any similar documents in any language, and furnish striking

contrasts to the correspondence on the English side. Señor Buitrago, although now holding the post of Secretary of War, was once the highest officer in the State. As an orator and a publicist, he is probably entitled to the first position in the country. He is, I believe, the author of the existing constitution, and is now a member of the new National Representation. Of Gen. Muñoz I have elsewhere spoken. To him, it is universally conceded, belongs the honor of having effectively reformed the army, and, from the terror and scourge of the State, made it the bulwark of its peace.

The political history of Nicaragua, up to the period of the dissolution of the Confederacy, in 1838, is so intimately connected with that of the other States, composing the old Republic, as to preclude its separate consideration. And, subsequent to that event, its relations with San Salvador and Honduras, with which it has recently effected a Federal Union, have been so close, that the history of one must, almost of necessity, be the history of the other. I have therefore proposed to reserve all that I may have to say upon these subjects for a distinct essay, entitled "*Outline of the Political History of Central America*," which will be found appended to this volume.

END OF NARRATIVE.

INTEROCEANIC CANAL.

INTEROCEANIC CANAL.

CHAPTER I.

CONSIDERATION OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL FEATURES OF NICARAGUA, AS CONNECTED WITH THE PROJECTED INTEROCEANIC CANAL.

COLUMBUS discovered the American Continent, and Magellan the Straits which bear his name, in their attempts to find "a short and easy passage to the Indies." The same hope sustained Cortes, when, followed by only a handful of soldiers, he advanced into the heart of the hostile Empire of Mexico. That leading object was not abandoned in his reverses, or forgotten in his triumphs. The Emperor Charles V., in a letter written in 1528, from Valladolid, enjoins him to search carefully for "*el Secreto del Estrecho*," the Secret of the Strait, which should connect the eastern and western shores of New Spain, and shorten by two-thirds, as it was then supposed, the route from Cadiz to "the land of spices" and the shores of Cathay. In his reply to this letter, Cortes indulges in the expression of the highest hopes of making this grand discovery, "which," he adds, "would render the King of Spain master of so many kingdoms, that he might consider himself Lord of the World."

But Cortes and his followers sought in vain; the "Secret

of the Strait" was past finding out; and the fact that no natural communication existed between the two seas, became early established. From that moment, as I have already said, the project of opening an artificial communication from one ocean to the other, has occupied the minds of men. Five principal points have been indicated as probably feasible for that grand undertaking. They are:—

1st. The Isthmus of Tehuantepec, between the sources of the Rio Chimalapa or Chicapa, which falls into the Pacific Ocean; and the Rio Coatzacalco, or Huasacualco, falling into the Atlantic.

2d. The Isthmus of Nicaragua, *via* the Rio San Juan, Lake Nicaragua, to the Gulf of Papagayo, the Port of Realejo, or the Gulf of Fonseca.

3d. The Isthmus of Panama.

4th. The Isthmus of Darien, or Cupica.

5th. The Isthmus between the Rio Atrato, falling into the Atlantic, and the Rio Choco, which empties into the Pacific.

From the period when Gomara wrote, in 1551, until the present time, the subject of the communication has been a matter of much speculation; but beyond a few partial surveys, until very lately, nothing of a practical character has been attempted. The recent acquisitions of the United States on the Pacific, attended by the discovery of extraordinary mineral wealth in California, have given this direction to American enterprise, and have rendered it probable that the two oceans will speedily be connected at several points by railroad or canal, one or both, and that a complete revolution will thereby be effected in the commercial relations of the world.

It has been universally conceded that the only communication which can really confer any great benefit upon commerce, must be by means of a canal capable of passing with safety and rapidity the largest ships. And it has as generally been conceded, by those who have investigated the sub-

ject, that the only route practicable for such a purpose is that *via* Lake Nicaragua, and its dependent waters. It has good harbors upon both coasts, and passes through a country remarkable for its salubrity, and capable of furnishing all the supplies which would be required by the commerce of the world, should it take this direction.

But although it has occupied so large a share of the attention of all maritime nations, and furnished a subject for innumerable essays in almost every language of Europe, it is astonishing that so little has actually been ascertained concerning it. The data upon which most writers have proceeded have been exceedingly vague, and have, in more than one instance, received an undue coloring from their prejudices. This renders it more important that a complete and accurate survey of the proposed route should speedily be made by competent engineers; not a simple reconnoissance on a single line, but a thorough examination of every line which may be thought feasible. And it is not less important that these surveys should be impartially made, in good faith, and not with the view of subserving the purposes of unscrupulous speculators, or of companies organized for the sale of stocks.

During my residence in Nicaragua, in accordance both with my duty and my inclination, I availed myself of every opportunity of procuring authentic information upon the subject of this communication, and personally visited most of the proposed lines across the Nicaraguan Isthmus. My information is necessarily general in its nature, for I had neither instruments nor assistants to enable me to get at mathematical data, upon which alone practical operations can be predicated. Until we shall have these, my observations, made on the spot, may not prove valueless.

The great problem connected with the subject of the proposed canal, and which has universally been esteemed as vital to the question of its feasibility, is this: *Is the great chain of*

the Cordilleras interrupted at any point upon the great Central Isthmus? To this question I am enabled to answer in the affirmative. Between the great Basin of Nicaragua, in which are the Lakes Managua and Nicaragua, and which is drained by the River San Juan, flowing into the Caribbean sea—that is to say, between the western extremity of Lake Managua and the Pacific, the Cordilleras are *wholly interrupted*, and we have only the great plains of Leon and Conejo, rising, for a distance of three thousand yards, to an elevation of about sixty feet above the lake, and two hundred above the sea, and thence subsiding, in a gentle slope, to the ocean. Between Lake Nicaragua and the Pacific, there is a narrow strip of land, not exceeding fourteen miles in width at its narrowest part; but it is traversed by an elevated ridge, which at the point deemed most favorable for the construction of a canal, has been found, by measurement, to rise to the height of several hundred feet above the ocean.

The starting point of the proposed canal, upon the Atlantic, for reasons which will be obvious enough by reference to the Map of Nicaragua, accompanying this book, must be at the Port of San Juan de Nicaragua. It is equally obvious that the projected work must pass up the valley of San Juan, to Lake Nicaragua. From this lake, however, various routes of communication with the Pacific have been suggested.

1st. By way of the River Sapoa, falling into Lake Nicaragua, to the Bay or Gulf of Bolaños or Salinas, on the Pacific.

2nd. By way of the Rio Lajas, falling into Lake Nicaragua, near the city of Rivas or Nicaragua, or some point in that vicinity, to the little harbor of Concordia, or San Juan del Sur, on the Pacific.

3d. By way of the Estero de Panaloya, extending from Lake Nicaragua to within four miles of the Lake of Managua, and through this lake to, 1st, the little port of Tamarinda on the Pacific; or, 2d, to the well-known port of Realejo; or, 3d,

via the Estero Real, to the magnificent Gulf or Bay of Fonseca.

I shall present, in a compendious manner, the facts of which I am in possession, in respect to those routes in the order above named.

RIVER AND PORT OF SAN JUAN.

The detailed and accurate "Map of the San Juan River" herewith presented, and the observations contained in the second and third chapters of the preceding narrative, preclude the necessity of any further extended references to the Port and River of San Juan. I shall, therefore, confine myself to a mere recapitulation of the facts therein embodied.

The position, form, size, and depth of the harbor are shown in the authentic map accompanying the survey of the river, which is reduced from one constructed by George Peacock, of H. B. M.'s ship Hyacinth, in 1832, subsequently corrected, and published under the order of the British Admiralty, in 1848. The San Juan River has several mouths, viz: the Colorado, the Taura, and the San Juan. The latter debouches, by several channels, into the harbor. The point of divergence is about fourteen miles distant from the port, and the whole intervening country is a low delta, or alluvion, interspersed with lagunas, and often partially covered with water, during the prevalence of heavy rains in the interior. The Colorado mouth carries off the greatest part of the water of the river, probably not much less than two thirds, and opens directly into the ocean. A bar, impassable for vessels of any considerable size, exists at its mouth. It is not supposed that, under any practicable system of improvements, this mouth could be used for commercial purposes, or as a means of entering the river.

It has been suggested that the channel of the Colorado was cut or enlarged by the Spaniards, under the Empire, to

prevent the ascent of hostile vessels; but the suggestion is simply absurd. The delta has existed very nearly in its present form and condition, without doubt, for many centuries. The loss of water by the Colorado has been calculated at 28,000 cubic yards per minute in the dry, and 86,000 per minute in the rainy season.

The Taura mouth is small; that opening into the harbor, and which bears the name of the river, is broad, but shallow, with a narrow channel, through which the little, native boats or bongos, which seldom draw more than three feet of water, often find it difficult, and sometimes impossible to pass. It is studded with low islands; and the depth varies from three to eight feet; bottom mud and sand, and channel constantly shifting.

From the point of divergence to the mouth of the Serapiqui, the current is regular, and the depth from six to thirty feet; average depth twelve feet. To the divergence of Juanillo, the banks are low, but beyond that point, they become from eight to twenty feet in height, firm and well-wooded. The San Juanillo has a narrow channel at its point of separation, but soon widens into a broad and deep lagoon, called the Laguna de San Juanillo. I was told that it has a depth of water ranging from two to six fathoms, and that with some improvements at its entrance and where it again joins the San Juan, it might probably be made navigable for small steamers, and obviate the difficulty now experienced in the navigation from the Colorado to the harbor.

The Rio Serapiqui is a large stream, rising at the foot of the great volcano of Cartago, in Costa Rica, and is navigable for canoes to a point called San Alfonso, a distance of twenty or twenty-five miles. At this point commences a mule path, "road" as it is sometimes called, which communicates with San Jose, the capital of Costa Rica.

It is thirteen miles from the Rio Serapiqui to the Rio San Carlos, which also rises at the base of the volcano of Cartago,

and may be ascended by bongos for from fifteen to twenty miles. The river is broad, with banks firm and well wooded, but not high, and has a depth of from six to thirty feet in the channel; average depth fourteen feet; current strong but even. From the Rio San Carlos to the Rapids of Machuca, also a distance of thirteen miles, the banks are high and studded with beautiful trees; the current regular, but the depth variable, ranging from six to forty feet in mid-channel; average depth twenty feet.

The Rapids of the Machuca are the longest, and in many respects the worst, on the river. They are not far from half a mile in length; the river here is spread over a wide, rocky, and crooked bed, with large rocks projecting above the surface of the stream, between which the water rushes with the greatest velocity. They are considered dangerous by the native boatmen, who are only enabled to ascend them by keeping close to the northern shore, where the current is least, and where the boat is pushed up by main force. It is often necessary to take out part of the load both in going up and coming down. Descending boats, in order to avoid this trouble, sometimes venture into the central, tortuous channels; but this is always perilous. The boat in which I descended the river, June 1850, attempted this course, but was jammed amongst the rocks, and had it not been new and strong, would inevitably have gone to pieces. We were detained in this dangerous position for thirty hours. The little steamer "Orus" sent out by Mr. Vanderbilt, in September of the same year, after having succeeded in entering the river by the Colorado mouth, was completely wrecked upon the rocks, at these Rapids. A smaller steamer, called the "Director," sent out by the same gentleman, was got past this point, at the expense of great labor and some weeks of time. It is very clear, that without some great artificial improvement, these Rapids will prove an insuperable obstacle to regular steam navigation on this river.

About three miles above the Machuca Rapids, are the Rapids of Mico and Los Valos, which however are close together, and may be regarded as one. Still above these are the Rapids of the Castillo. For the whole distance between the Machuca and the Castillo, the banks of the river are rocky; the bottom is also rough and rocky. The depth is very uneven, varying from five to twenty feet within the space of hardly as many rods. The current is rapid, and all upward navigation difficult.

The Rapids of the Castillo are the shortest of the series, and almost deserve the name of falls. Here considerable ridges come down to the river on either side. Upon the extreme point of that upon the south bank, is the old fort or castle of San Juan, now known as El Castillo Viejo. The rapids, without artificial modifications, would present nearly an insuperable obstacle to all kinds of navigation deserving the name. Bongos cannot ascend loaded; when they have cargoes, part has to be removed and carried past the falls. The boats are then *tracked*, or pushed up against the current, by main force. My bongo was upward of three hours in getting as many hundred yards.

Five miles above the Castillo are the Rapides del Toro. The banks are firm and high, and the soil seems well adapted for settlements. These rapids are about three fourths of a mile long. The water, of course, varies in depth with the different seasons of the year. At the time of my passage, it was, certainly for most of its extent, less than a fathom in depth. Bulow gives the current at 180 to 200 yards per minute, but I esteem it something more.

From the Rapides del Toro to Lake Nicaragua is a distance of twenty-four miles. The current for this distance is slight —according to Baron Bulow, not exceeding *one and a-half miles the hour.* The channel is wide, and the depth of the water from two to four fathoms; average thirteen feet. The banks are low, and the back country flat and swampy. Some

sluggish streams come in from both north and south, but they are almost hidden by the overhanging trees. At the head of the river, is the old fort of San Carlos.

The water of the lake opposite the fort and fronting the opening of the San Juan, is very shallow, not exceeding six or seven feet in depth for the distance of a mile and upward from the shore. Near this point the Rio Frio (Cold River) comes in from the south. It is a large stream, and is represented to have two fathoms water for a distance of forty miles from its mouth.

I have no hesitation in asserting that the San Juan never can be made navigable for ships of any considerable size. Small steamers, with some improvements in the channel, might be run without much difficulty; and this is *all* that can be hoped for from this stream.

In case it should be determined to open communication for ships across the continent at this point, it would be necessary to cut a canal at the base of the hills parallel to the stream, which might be made to yield, at the necessary intervals, the requisite supply of water. It is possible that the river might be used from the lake to the Toro Rapids, though even this is not certain. I am convinced that the ground rises not very far back from the river on the north, and that stone and all the materials necessary for the construction of a canal might be obtained, without difficulty, very nearly on the spot desired. These are things, however, which can only be determined from actual survey. A canal upon the southern bank, for reasons sufficiently obvious, from what has been presented above, is impracticable.

It has been conjectured by some that formerly the volume of water in the San Juan was much more considerable than it now is. This conjecture was doubtless founded on the circumstance of strong defences having been erected by the Spaniards, many years since, upon the banks both of the river and the lake, implying that it was an important channel of

communication, and upon the known fact that vessels denominated in early times "frigates" were accustomed to pass from the ocean to the lake and from the lake to the ocean. Indeed, it would seem that vessels sometimes sailed direct from Granada to the ports of Spain; but from the accounts of Gage, who visited Nicaragua about 1670, it appears that the task of passing "El Desaguadero," or the San Juan, was one of great difficulty and danger. He says: "For though while the vessels sail on the lake securely and without trouble, yet, when they fall from the lake to the sea, *hic labor, hoc opus est*—here is nothing but trouble, which sometimes makes that short voyage to last for *sixty days;* for such is the fall of the waters in many places among the rocks, that many times they are forced to unload the '*frigates*,' and load them again with the help of mules kept for that purpose by the few Indians who live about the river and have care of the lodges made to lay in the wares, while the frigate passes through dangerous places to another lodge, whither the wares are brought by mules and again placed in the frigate." These vessels, here called "frigates," were probably of small size, not exceeding eighty or a hundred tons burden. Vessels of this size may still, with extraordinary efforts, be taken up during high water in the river, as was shown in 1826, by Capt. Peter Shepherd, of San Juan, who took a schooner of fifty-two tons through the river by removing her keel and warping the whole distance. In this condition the vessel drew three feet six inches. The task was accomplished in thirty-two days. It may be observed here, upon the authority of Captain Shepherd, that this vessel, with her keel replaced and loaded, drew seven feet of water, and that *then*, in the dry season, she could not approach within two miles of San Carlos. Such being the fact, extensive works would be necessary to enable ships to pass from the lake into any canal which might be constructed.

This part of the line of the proposed canal, i. e., from the

Atlantic to Lake Nicaragua, has been hitherto passed over with very little remark, on the assumption, apparently, that here no difficulty existed, and that the river might readily be made to answer every desirable purpose. It will however be found to be the most difficult part of the whole enterprise; not less on account of the insufficiency of the river for ship navigation, than on account of the climate.

It should be observed, before dismissing this portion of the subject, that the rapids in the river are not formed by the simple aggregation of rocks, but by the interposition of beds of hornblendic and very solid rock, in their natural position, or uplifted by subterranean forces. Mr. Baily inclines to the opinion that these beds, or some of them, have been upheaved at a comparatively late period, by volcanic agency. Amongst the reasons which he gives for this opinion, is the following:

"In further corroboration of this hypothesis may be cited an incident that occurred in 1648, in which year a Spanish brigantine, from Carthagena de las Indias, arrived at Granada: after discharging her cargo and taking another on board, she started on her return voyage, but on proceeding down the river, it was found to be so obstructed at a certain point that the passage was impossible; she was consequently taken back to Granada, the cargo was relanded, and the vessel laid up at a place near by, called the Isletas, where, after lying some years, she was broken up. Protests and documents confirmatory of this fact are still existing in the municipal archives of the city. There is indeed no record extant of violent earthquake, nor extraordinary volcanic explosion, having happened at that period; yet the *possibility* of the event just supposed need not be rejected as purely imaginary, in the face of the historical evidences there are of the rising of Monte Nuevo, near Naples, in 1538; of Jorullo, in Mexico, in 1759; and some more modern instances; though certainly most of these are known to have been accompanied by earthquakes."

The following table will present the leading facts connected with the stream:

Stations.	Distances, including windings.	Greatest depth.	Least depth.	Average depth.	Bottom.	Banks.
	Miles.	Feet.	Feet.	Feet.		
From Port to divergence of Colorado, . .	14	8	3	6	sand and mud.	low.
" Colorado to Serapiqui . . .	9	30	6	12	"	medium.
" Serapiqui to Rio San Carlos . . .	13	36	6	13	"	"
" Rio San Carlos to Rapids of Machuca .	13	42	6	19	"	"
" Rapids of Machuca to Rapids del Toro .	15	24	5	10	rocky.	"
" Rapids del Toro to Lake . . .	24	24	8	13	mud.	low.
Total	88	42	3	12		

LAKE NICARAGUA.

According to Mr. Baily, the Lake of Nicaragua is about one hundred and five statute miles in greatest length, by forty-five in greatest breadth. I have elsewhere estimated it at about one hundred and twenty in length, by fifty or sixty in greatest breadth. "Near the shores," says Mr. Baily, "that is to say, at a distance of one hundred yards from the beach, there is generally a depth of two fathoms of water; in other parts, all the intermediate soundings, from five to fifteen fathoms, are found." Mr. A. G., quoted by Louis Napoleon, in his pamphlet on the subject, sounded forty-five fathoms (270 feet), in the middle of the lake. Upon the northern side of the lake, the water is comparatively shallow; it is also shallow near its outlet, and near the commencement of the Estero de Panaloya, at its head.

Its height above the ocean has been variously estimated; and the measurements which have been made do not entirely agree. According to Mr. Baily, and as the result of three

hundred and fifty-one levels, taken by him in 1838, between the port of San Juan del Sur, on the Pacific, and the mouth of the river Lajas, the level of the lake is 128 feet 3 inches above that of the Pacific. Assuming this to be correct, and that the result arrived at by Mr. Lloyd, and others, viz., that the Pacific, at low water, in the Bay of Panama, is six feet six inches lower than the Caribbean Sea at Chagres, is also correct, it follows that Lake Nicaragua is 121 feet 9 inches above the Atlantic. Galisteo, a Spanish Engineer, who investigated the subject in 1781, fixes the level of the lake at 134 feet above that of the Pacific; and the tables presented in Thompson's Guatemala make it 141 feet 8 inches. The level varies somewhat with the season of the year; this variation, Mr. Baily ascertained to be about six feet six inches.

The river San Juan, including its windings, is 88 miles in length; it has therefore a fall of a fraction more than 16 inches to the mile.

ROUTES BETWEEN LAKE NICARAGUA AND THE PACIFIC.

Via Rio Sapoa, on Lake Nicaragua, to the Bay of Bolaños, or Salinas, on the Pacific.

This route has been very recently suggested; and we have but little information concerning it. For what we have we are indebted to Dr. Andraes Oersted, of Copenhagen, who seems to have made a reconnaisance of it in 1848. I have in my possession an original map of the proposed line, made by him, and presented to me by Dr. F. V. Clark, lately resident in Costa Rica, of which a reduced copy and an explanatory section accompany the Map of the river San Juan.

It will be seen that the entire distance from the lake to the ocean is represented to be only thirteen and a half miles.

If this be correct, the isthmus is here narrower than at any other point. It is also claimed that the river Sapoa can be made navigable for half of this distance; and we are left to infer that it has a volume of water sufficiently great to supply the canal, from that point to the sea. But taking in view the length of the river, and the small space of country which it drains, this is hardly to be credited. If the fall of the river is truly represented in the section, it cannot be less than sixty feet in six miles; in order, therefore to be made navigable for that distance, it will require locks, and other improvements, of the extent and nature of which we have no means of judging.

The greatest height of land, or the summit level, on this line is set down at 258 feet above the Pacific (i. e., 129 feet 9 inches above the lake) and not far from 70 feet above the highest point of navigation on the Sapoa, when that river shall have been improved as above suggested.

The Bay of Salinas, the proposed Pacific terminus of the canal, on this line, is a very fine one, and much better adapted for commercial purposes than any other to the northward, short of Realejo. The State of Costa Rica, which has set up some pretensions to sovereignty over this part of Nicaragua, in 1848 made a grant of this line to an English company. But by a letter from the British Vice Consul in Nicaragua to Lord Palmerston, written in 1848, it appears that the examination of the line, in that year, proved it to be impracticable.

Line from the mouth of Rio Lajas, on Lake Nicaragua, to the Port of San Juan Del Sur, on the Pacific.

This is the line to which public attention has been oftenest directed, and upon which nearly all practical operations have hitherto been conducted. It was surveyed in 1781, under

order of the Spanish Government, by Don Manual Galisteo; and subsequently by some other engineer, in the service of Spain, the results of whose measurements are published in the Appendix to Thompson's Guatemala. In 1838 it was again surveyed by Mr. John Baily, under the direction of the Federal Government of Central America. These various surveys were not on precisely the same line; although there can be no doubt that they all terminated at the little port of San Juan del Sur, on the Pacific. They show that a high, broad ridge of land intervenes between the lake and ocean. The height of this ridge is variable; but after riding in person along the greatest part of its length, I am satisfied that it is unbroken.[1]

The following table shows some of the results of the surveys on this line, by the engineers above referred to:

Authorities.	Distance from Lake to Ocean.		Greatest Elevation above Ocean.	Greatest Elevation above Lake.
	Miles.	Feet.	Feet.	Feet.
Galisteo	17	200	272	134
Quoted by Thompson .	17	330	296	154
Baily	16	730	615	487

The distance, according to Mr. Baily's survey, is 28,409 yards; of which 14,420 yards are on or below the level of the lake, viz: 8,960 below, and 5,460 on the same level, the latter being the extent to which it is calculated the river Lajas might be used. The average altitude above the lake for the

[1] It will be time enough to credit the report which has recently been set afloat, that a passage has been discovered, "which is only twelve miles in length, and requires but forty-eight feet of vertical cutting, to cause the waters of the lake to mingle with those of the ocean," when we shall have the facts and figures presented by competent engineers; when, in short, it is demonstrated.

remaining distance, 13,989 yards, is 179 feet. According to the table given by Thompson, a section of 14,700 yards of the line is above the level of the lake, and has an average altitude of 78 feet. Assuming that the supply of water to feed the proposed canal must be drawn from the lake, the vertical excavation necessary to its construction, allowing thirty feet for its depth, would be as follows:—

Baily's Line	13,989 yards,	of 209 feet average vertical cutting.
	14,420 "	" 30 " " "
Other Line	14,700 yards,	of 108 feet average vertical cutting.
	14,330 "	" 30 " " "

These figures utterly preclude the idea, not the possibility, (for who shall say what is impossible?) of constructing the proposed work on either of these lines of survey. The two greatest canals in the world, designed for the passage of large vessels, are the Caledonian Canal in Scotland, and that in Holland from Amsterdam to Niewdiep. The first of these is 21½ miles long, is 20 feet deep, 50 feet wide at bottom, and 122 feet wide at the top. It has a lockage of one hundred and ninety feet, and is capable of passing frigates of thirty-two guns, and merchant vessels of a thousand tons. It cost, in round numbers, $5,000,000. The second has no locks, being a tide canal, is 50 miles long, 20 feet 9 inches deep, 36 feet wide at bottom, and 124 at the top. It cost twelve millions of guilders, or a little more than the Caledonian Canal. I have already said that no canal except one capable of passing the largest ships from one ocean to the other, could adequately meet the requirements of commerce and the age. The proposed canal must then be of larger dimensions than that of Scotland or Holland. Admitting, for the sake of instituting comparisons, that a canal 30 feet deep, 50 feet wide at the bottom, and 150 at the top, would fully answer to these con-

ditions, we have the following comparative results, in respect to the amount of excavation:

Caledonian Canal	183,902,400	cubic feet.
Holland "	422,400,000	" "
Proposed Canal, on Baily's line	4,927,577,809	" "

That is to say, apart from any other portions of the proposed line, the single section from Lake Nicaragua to the Pacific, would require more than *ten times* the amount of excavation performed in constructing the Holland Canal, and fifty times that of the Caledonian Canal, which, from the nature of the ground overcome, locks, etc., affords the best standard of calculation. At the same ratio of expense, this section alone would cost $250,000,000!

An open-cut canal, therefore, from Lake Nicaragua to the Pacific, to be supplied with water from the lake, on any line hitherto surveyed, is impracticable,—if on no other ground, certainly on that of cost. It has been proposed to avoid or obviate this objection, by the construction of a tunnel for part of the distance, where the height of land is greatest. But any canal designed for the passage of large ships, which requires the construction of a tunnel, of any considerable length, is *prima facie*, impracticable. In the particular instance before us, if the open cuttings were carried, upon either side of the summit, until they became 90 feet deep, yet there would still remain 5888 yards, or upwards of three miles, of tunneling to be accomplished. But neither Mr. Baily, nor the most daring of those who have made this suggestion, have ventured to propose a tunnel of this length. They have suggested a tunnel commencing at an elevation of 122 feet above the lake, which would reduce its length to a trifle over a mile, but increase the vertical lockage from 128 to 372 feet. The fatal objection to this plan, however, is the lack of water to supply the upper levels, and to lock

down vessels, both to the lake and ocean. Mr. Baily suggests the collection of the waters of the little streams and rivulets, rising on this narrow isthmus, and the "*sinking of Artesian wells*" to furnish the requisite supply! I have no hesitation in saying, after passing over these heights, that the whole amount of water which it would be possible to collect from these sources, would not supply the simple *leakage*, to say nothing of the evaporation, of a canal of the kind required.

These few stubborn facts, unless some more favorable line shall be discovered, must settle the question, so far as regards a canal across the narrow isthmus intervening directly between Lake Nicaragua and the ocean. For although here appears to be the natural and most obvious route for the work, yet its practicability must be tested by the same standards which regulate the construction of all works of improvement and public utility.

It is proper to add that, in constructing the canal, Mr. Baily proposed to make use of what is called the river Lajas, which falls into the lake a few miles below the city of Rivas, for a distance of 5,460 yards from its mouth. For this distance, he states that it has a breadth of from thirty to one hundred yards, and a depth of from six to eighteen feet; bottom mud, and rock from nine to twenty-eight feet beneath.

But no one should be deceived by the use of the term "Rio," as applied in Spanish America; for it may mean anything from a rill upwards. The misapprehension of this term, and of *monte*, which signifies generally forest, or uncultivated land, has led to great errors by map-makers and others, deriving their information from the Spanish authorities. Thus, between Leon and Realejo, there is a forest called *Monte de San Juan*, and certain writers have therefore inferred that a mountain intervenes between the two places; while, in fact, the whole country is a dead plain. The Rio Lajas is a running stream for only a part of the year. During the dry season it is simply a long, narrow lagoon, of sluggish

Lethean water, without current, and the bar at its mouth is dry, cutting off all connection with the lake. The lake along this part of the coast is very shallow, the bottom rock.

MOUTH OF THE RIO LAJAS. VOLCANO OF OMETEPEC.

In respect to the port of San Juan del Sur, or Concordia, the same author observes that it is small; entrance 1,100 yards across, between promontories from 400 to 500 feet high; land sandy and low at its head; depth, 200 yards from shore, two fathoms, increasing to ten fathoms, which is the depth at the entrance; rise of tide ten to fourteen feet. A mile to the northward is another little port, called Nacascolo, or Brito, of nearly the same size and figure. Between the two the land is low; and Mr. Baily suggests that they might be connected by a cut, and one used as a port of entrance, the other as a port of exit. But neither of these is an adequate terminus for a work like the proposed canal, and under the best of circumstances, and even for purposes of transit, both would require artificial improvements.

There is one grand objection to this port, as also to all others which are found on the coast of the Pacific, parallel to

Lake Nicaragua, viz., the character of the prevailing winds. These are called *Papagayos*, literally, *parrots*, probably from the crooked bill of that bird, which illustrates their revolving direction. They render approach to this portion of the coast extremely difficult. They prevail from Punta Desolada on the north, to Cape Velas on the south, a distance of not far from two hundred miles, and are supposed to be caused by the north-east trades, which, as I have said, sweep entirely across the continent and Lake Nicaragua, and encounter other atmospheric currents on the Pacific. These trades are strongly felt, blowing off the shore, for a distance of fifteen or twenty miles, beyond which the conflicting or revolving winds, or Papagayos, commence.[1]

CONNECTION BETWEEN LAKE NICARAGUA AND LAKE MANAGUA.

It is not known that any other direct routes for a canal between Lake Nicaragua and the Pacific have been suggested. These present what appear to be insuperable difficulties. But it has been claimed that, from the superior lake of the great terrestrial basin of Nicaragua, Lake Managua or Leon, a route can be found to good ports on the Pacific, free from the difficulties and objections surrounding those already noticed. The first consideration, therefore, relates to the connection between the two lakes.

Upon this point much confusion and misapprehension exist, which have, to a certain extent, been set right and corrected in Chapter XV. of the preceding "Narrative," to which the reader is referred. Between Lake Nicaragua and Lake Managua is about sixteen miles. For twelve miles of this distance extends the Estero de Panaloya, which is a broad, shallow arm of Lake Nicaragua, ranging from six to

[1] Sir Edward Belcher's Voyage round the World, vol. i., p. 185.

fifteen feet in depth, with low banks, and for most of the way, a muddy bottom. This estero, is really part of Lake Nicaragua, and the true distance between the lakes is therefore only about four miles.

The estate of Pasquiel, at the head of this estuary, is the limit of navigation. Above, for a mile and a half, to "Paso Chico," the bed of the river is full of large and isolated rocks, resting upon a bed of rock which seems to be calcareous breccia, but, singularly enough, intermixed with fragments of *lava*, as well as various granite stones, jasper, and other materials. Beyond "Paso Chico," the bed, or rather the former bed of the river, (for there is now no water here except what flows from springs, or is deposited in large pools in the depressions of the rock by the rains,) is the same solid breccia, worn into basins and fantastic "pot-holes" by the water. Within one mile of the Lake of Managua is the fall of Tipitapa, opposite the little village of that name. It is a ledge of the same rock above described, and is from twelve to fifteen feet in height. The former bed of the stream is here not less than 400 feet in width. From the falls to the lake, the ancient bed is wide but shallow, and is now covered with grass and bushes, resembling a neglected pasture. At the time of my visit no water flowed through it, nor, so far as I could learn, had any flowed there for years. I can, however, readily believe that in an extremely wet season a small quantity may find its way through this channel, and over the falls. It is, nevertheless, very evident that no considerable body of water ever passed here. There is an arm of the lake which projects down the old bed for three or four hundred yards, but the water is only two or three feet deep, with an equal depth of soft, gray mud, the dwelling-place of numerous alligators, with reedy shores, thronged with every variety of water-birds. The water of Lake Managua, near the so-called outlet, is not deep, and the channel, in order to admit of the passage of large vessels,

would probably require to be well dredged, if not protected by parallel piers. At the distance of about three-fourths of a mile from the shore, I found, by actual measurement, that the water did not exceed two fathoms in depth. No great obstruction to building the proposed canal exists in the section between the two lakes. The rock is so soft and friable that a channel can easily be opened from Lake Managua to the falls. Beyond this the banks are high for three miles, forming a natural canal which only needs to be properly dammed, at its lower extremity, to furnish a body of water adequate to every purpose of navigation. Locks would then be required to reach the estuary of Panaloya. From this point to the lake, I conceive, may prove the most difficult part of this section, although apparently the easiest. Where the bottom is earth or mud, the desirable depth of water may be secured by dredging; but where it is rock, as it certainly is near its upper extremity, some difficult excavation will be required. The banks downward are so low as to prohibit assistance from dams, except by diking the shores.

The Tipitapa is bordered by low and slightly undulating, but very rich and beautiful lands, interspersed with glades, and chiefly occupied for cattle estates. Abundance of Brazil wood grows here, and large quantities are annually shipped in bongos from Pasquiel for the port of San Juan, passing thence to all parts of the world, but chiefly to the United States.

Lake Managua may thus be said virtually to have no outlet. The streams which come in from the Pacific side are insignificant; and though, as already stated, the Rio Grande and other streams of considerable size flow into it from the direction of Segovia, yet they vary much with the season of the year, and seldom furnish a greater quantity of water than is requisite to supply the evaporation from so large a surface, in a tropical climate. Nevertheless, a reservoir like that of Managua, with 1,200 square miles of surface,

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would be adequate to supply all the water required for a ship canal at this point, without any sensible diminution of its volume. The winds on the lake blow freshly from the north-east during the afternoon and evening, and subside towards morning, causing an ebb and flow, in its results corresponding with that produced by the tides of the ocean; hence the vulgar error of a subterranean communication with the sea.

SECTIONS BETWEEN LAKE MANAGUA AND THE PACIFIC.

The country between Lake Managua and the Pacific is much more favorable for the construction of a canal than that between Lake Nicaragua and the same ocean. The dividing ridge, to which I have alluded, as separating the waters of the latter lake from the sea, also extends along the intervening isthmus, until very nearly to the head of Lake Managua. Here it is wholly interrupted, or rather subsides into broad plains, rising but a few feet above the lake, and thence descending in a gentle slope to the ocean. Three lines across these plains have been suggested; 1st, by the left shore of the lake to the small port of the Tamarinda; 2d, by the same shore to the well known port of Realejo; and 3d, by the upper shore of the lake to the Gulf of Fonseca, or Conchagua. It is probable that all of these lines are feasible, but a minute survey can only determine which is best.

Tamarinda Line.

The first line suggested, that to the port of the Tamarinda, is considerably shorter than either of the others, not exceeding fifteen or eighteen miles in length. But the water of the lake upon its north-western shore, in the bay of Moabita, is shallow. In company with Dr. Livingston, U. S. Consul,

I sounded it in July 1849. It deepened regularly from the shore to the distance of one mile, when it attained five fathoms. After that it deepened rapidly to ten and fifteen fathoms. The country between the lake and El Tamarinda, so far as can be ascertained, it being covered with forests, is level, and offers no insuperable obstacle to a canal. There is no town or village near the port, and it seems to have escaped general notice. Nor is it known that it has ever been entered by vessels, except in one or two instances for the purpose of loading Brazil wood. It is small, and tolerably well protected; but is not a proper termination for a work like the proposed canal.

Realejo Line.

The second line is that to the well known and excellent port of Realejo, formed by the junction of the Telica or Doña Paula and Realejo rivers, and protected on the side of the sea by the islands of Cardon and Asserradores, and a bluff of the main-land. It is safe and commodious, and the water is good, ranging from three and four to eight and nine fathoms. The volcano of El Viejo, lifting its cone upwards of 6,000 feet above the sea, to the north-eastward of the port, forms an unmistakable landmark for the mariner, long before any other part of the coast is visible. This line, starting from the nearest practicable point of Lake Managua, cannot fall short of forty-five miles in length. It is said that the Estero of Doña Paula, which is truly only that part of the Telica river up which the tide flows, might be made use of for a considerable distance; but that can only be determined by actual survey. I can discover no reason why this route could not be advantageously pursued. It has the present advantage of passing through the most populous and best cultivated part of the country, and terminating at a point already well known. There is no stream upon this line

which, as has been supposed by Louis Napoleon and some other writers on this subject, can be made available for supplying this section of the proposed canal with water. The "Rio Tosta," of which they speak, (by which, from its described position, it is supposed the *Rio Telica* is meant, for no stream known as the Rio Tosta exists,) was formerly a stream of some size, but never furnished a quantity of water sufficient to supply an ordinary canal. The local geography of the plain of Leon is little known to its inhabitants; and, as the roads are hemmed in by impenetrable forests, it is impossible for the traveller to inform himself of the minor topographical features of the country. The Rio Telica empties into the Estero Doña Paula, and it may possibly be made to answer a useful purpose. I have crossed it at many points where it has (as it has for nearly its entire length) the character of a huge natural canal, from sixty to eighty feet deep by perhaps one hundred and fifty or two hundred yards wide at the top, with steep banks, for the most part of a friable substratum of rock or compact earth. And as, at its source, it is not more than fifteen miles distant from Lake Managua, it is not improbable that, by proper cuttings, the waters of the lake might be brought into it, and, after the necessary level is attained, the bed of the stream might be used from that point to the sea, securing the necessary depth of water by locks or dams. If this suggestion is well founded, the principal part of the estimated excavation of this section of the canal may be avoided. In any event, the cutting would not, with the aids furnished by this mechanical age, be an object to deter the engineer.

Every traveller who has passed over the plain of Leon, concurs in representing that the range of hills separating Lake Nicaragua from the Pacific are here wholly interrupted; and I can add my unqualified testimony in support of the fact. The city of Leon is situated in the midst of this plain, midway between the lake and sea; and, from the flat

roof of its cathedral, the traveller may see the Pacific; and, were it not for the intervening forests, probably the lake. Mr. A. G., quoted by Louis Napoleon, and whose observations are uniformly very accurate, states that the ground, between lake and ocean, at a distance of 2,725 yards from the former, attains its maximum height of 55 feet 6 inches, and from thence slopes to the sea. Other observers vary in their estimates of this maximum elevation, from 49 feet 6 inches to 51 feet. Of course, the precise elevation can only be determined by actual survey. The city of Leon is distant, in a direct line, about fifteen or eighteen miles from the lake. Captain Belcher determined its height, above the Pacific, to be 140 feet;[1] which, deducted from the height of the lake, 156 feet, shows that the plain, where it is built, is 16 feet below the level of the lake.

It is probable that the deepest cutting on this line, allowing thirty feet for the depth of the proposed canal, would not exceed eighty feet, and this only for a short distance. We have examples of much more serious undertakings of this character. In the canal from Arles to Bouc the table-land Lèque has been cut through to the extent of 2,289 yards, the extreme depth being from 130 to 162 feet. I need hardly add that the Lake of Managua must supply the water requisite for the use of the canal, from its shores to the sea, as there are no reservoirs or streams of magnitude upon this line.

Lake Managua to the Gulf or Bay of Fonseca.

There is still another route, to which public attention has never been generally directed, but which, if feasible, of which I have no doubt, offers greater advantages than either of the others just named, viz., from the northern point of Lake Managua *via* the Estero Real to the Gulf of Fonseca or Conchagua. The upper part of Lake Managua is divided into two large bays by a vast promontory or peninsula, at the ex-

[1] Voyage Round the World, vol. i. p. 166.

treme point of which stands the giant volcano of Momotombo. Between this volcano and that of the Viejo, to the north-east of Realejo, running nearly east and west, is a chain of volcanoes, presenting, probably, in a short distance, a greater number of extinct craters, and more evidences of volcanic action, than any other equal extent of the continent. This chain is isolated. Upon the south is the magnificent plain of Leon, bounded only by the sea; and upon the north is also another great plain, the "*Llano del Conejo*," bounded by the auriferous hills of Segovia. This plain extends from the northern bay of Lake Managua to the Gulf Conchagua, which is equalled only by that of San Francisco, and may be described as a grand harbor, in which all the vessels of the world might ride in entire security. It much resembles that of San Francisco in position and form; the entrance from the sea is, however, broader. Its entire length within the land is not far from seventy miles, and its breadth forty miles. The three States of San Salvador, Nicaragua, and Honduras, have ports upon it. In respect to trade, the principal port on the main-land is that of La Union, in San Salvador. All the adjacent coasts are of unbounded fertility, and possess an unlimited supply of timber. The sides of the mountains, particularly of the volcano of San Miguel, are covered with oak and pine, suitable for building and repairing ships. Coal is said to occur about sixty miles from the port of La Union, on the banks of the Rio Lempa, the roads to the beds leading through a level country. The Bay embraces several islands of considerable size and beauty, surrounded by water, of such depth as to enable vessels of the largest class to approach close in-shore. The most important of these, from the circumstance of its size, and the fact that it commands and is the key to the entire Bay, is the island of Tigre, belonging to Honduras. This island was the headquarters and dépôt of Drake, and other piratical adventurers, during their operations in the South Sea. It is about

twenty miles in circumference, level near the shore, but rising regularly and gradually to a cone in the centre; thus affording almost every variety of air and climate desirable. Upon this island is situated the free port of Amapala, recently established, where there are a few storehouses and dwellings. The rest of the island is almost wholly uninhabited. The possession of this island, and consequent control of the Gulf of Fonseca, by any great maritime power, would enable it to exercise a command over the commerce of the western part of the continent, like that which the possession of Gibraltar by the English, gives them to exercise over that of Europe.

From the southern extremity of the Gulf of Fonseca, extends a large estuary, or arm, called el Estero Real. Its course is precisely in the direction of the Lake of Managua; which it approaches to within fifteen or twenty miles, and between it and the lake is the Plain of Conejo, which is, in fact, a part of the Plain of Leon. This Estero is as broad as the East River at New York, and has, for most of its extent, an ample depth of water. At thirty miles above the Bay it has fifty feet. There is a narrow bar at its mouth, upon which, at low tide, there are but about three fathoms. The tide rises, however, nearly ten feet; and with artificial aid the bar could, doubtless, be passed at all times. This Estero is one of the most beautiful natural channels that can be imagined; preserving, for a long distance, a very nearly uniform width of from three hundred to four hundred yards. Its banks are lined with mangroves, with a dense background of other trees.

Capt. Belcher, who was here in 1838, went thirty miles up the Estero, in a vessel drawing ten feet of water. He says: "To-day we started with the Starling, and other boats, to explore the Estero Real, which, I had been given to understand, was navigable for sixty miles; in which case, from what I saw of its course in my visit to the Viejo, it must nearly communicate with the Lake of Managua. After con-

siderable labor, we succeeded in carrying the Starling thirty miles from its mouth, and might easily have gone farther, had the wind permitted, but the prevailing strong winds rendered the toil of towing too heavy. We ascended a small hill, about a mile below our extreme position, from which angles were taken to all the commanding peaks. From that survey, added to what I remarked from the summit of the Viejo, I am satisfied that the stream could be followed many miles farther; and, I have not the slightest doubt, it is fed very near the Lake Managua. I saw the mountains *beyond* the lake on its eastern side, and *no land higher than the intervening trees occurred.* This, therefore, would be the most advantageous line for a canal, which, by entire lake navigation, might be connected with the interior of the States of San Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, and extend to the Atlantic. Thirty navigable miles for vessels drawing ten feet we can vouch for, and the natives and residents assert *sixty* (*thirty?*) more!"

From the course of the Estero, and the distance it is known to extend, it probably would not require a canal of more than twenty miles in length to connect its navigable waters with those of Lake Managua; in which case there would be a saving over the Realejo line, besides having the western terminus of the great work in the magnificent Bay which I have just described, where every facility is afforded for victualling, repairing, etc., and where a local trade of vast importance, in sugar, cotton, indigo, cacao, and coffee, would soon spring up.

It may, therefore, be safely asserted that a passage from the Lake of Managua to the sea is entirely feasible, and it only remains to determine which of the routes here indicated offers the greatest advantages. In case the canal is ever made, I am convinced that this will be the route. My own observations, made from the volcano of Las Pilas, overlooking the "Llano del Conejo," as well as the concurrent reports

of the natives, have satisfied me that this plain is lower than that of Leon, and that the excavation on this line would be less than on that to Realejo.

RECAPITULATION.

The subjoined table exhibits the estimated distances from sea to sea, on the various lines already described, as also the probable extent of actual canalization. It is assumed, throughout, that the River San Juan cannot be made navigable for ships, and that a lateral canal must be made, for its entire length. The length of the river, including its windings, is nearly ninety miles; but it is probable that the distance, in a right line, between the lake and the Atlantic does not exceed seventy miles.

Routes from the Port of San Juan to the Pacific.	Length of Rio San Juan.	Distance on Lake Nicaragua.	From Lake Nicaragua to Pacific.	Between Lakes Nicaragua and Managua.	Distance on Lake Managua.	Between Lake Managua and Pacific.	Actual Canalization.	Total Length.
To Bay of Salinas, .	70	50	13	—	—	—	83	133
" San Juan del Sur,	70	60	16	—	—	—	86	146
" Tamarinda, . .	70	110	—	4	50	16	90	250
" Realejo, ...	70	110	—	4	50	45	119	279
" Estero Real, . .	70	110	—	4	50	20	194	254

The length of the proposed line of communication from San Juan to Realejo is estimated by Louis Napoleon at 278 miles, as follows: Length of the San Juan, 104 miles; of Lake Nicaragua, 90 miles; River Tipitapa, 20 miles; Lake Leon, or Managua, 35 miles; and distance from the Lake to Realejo, 29 miles. This is positively erroneous in some particulars; as, for instance, the distance from Lake Managua to

Realejo, which, so far from being only 29 miles, is actually from 40 to 45 miles.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

It is useless to enter into calculations respecting the proper size, and respecting the cost of such a work, as the proposed canal. Its dimensions, in order to make it fully answer the purpose of its construction, must be sufficiently great to admit the easy passage of the largest vessels. Its cost, until there is a detailed survey of the entire line, must be entirely a matter of conjecture. It has been variously estimated at from six to twenty-five and thirty millions of dollars. Assume it to cost $100,000,000, which may be as near the truth as any other calculation; still it is enough to know that it is topographically *possible*, and that its benefits, immediate and prospective, will be sufficient to compensate for the expenditure of double that amount, startling as it may at first appear.

But there are other circumstances, besides the actual topographical features of the country, which must be taken in view, in estimating the feasibility, or rather the practicability, of a grand work like the proposed canal. The means of sustenance, climate, ability of procuring and applying labor, etc., must all be considered.

In respect to climate I need not add anything to the observations, on that subject, contained in the Introduction to this work. It cannot be doubted that the surveys, excavations, etc., on the San Juan will not only prove the most difficult of any section of the proposed canal, but, from the nature of things, be attended with greater injury to the health of those engaged there. The forests which line that river are dense and dank; and the removal of the trees and other vegetation, and the consequent exposure of the rich earth—the accumulated vegetable deposit of ages—to the sun, would prove a

prolific source of fevers and kindred diseases. The evil consequences could only be arrested by employing here, as elsewhere, the natives of this latitude, inured to labor and hardened to exposure. In fact, the principal reliance throughout must be upon this kind of laborers, who, for *two reals* (25 cents) per day (the standard price), would flock in great, if not all desirable numbers, from all the States of Central America. For a *medio* (6¼ cents) per day, each man provides his own support, without further cost to his employer. The laboring population is eminently docile, and can soon be brought to perform any kind of simple labor, as excavating, clearing, quarrying, burning lime, etc., in a satisfactory manner. In a country where there are so many festival days, it would be necessary to keep them a little in arrears, or possess some means of enforcing strict compliance with their contracts, to secure their constant attention to their work. This matter of labor, however, is a point upon which it is necessary, after the experience of the Panama Railroad Company, to speak with caution. It is one which, after a complete survey of the country by competent engineers, should claim the first attention of the Company or Government which shall seriously undertake the construction of the projected canal.

The following are the remarks made by Mr. Baily upon the matters here adverted to; and, coming from a man who has had some experience in field operations upon the line of the proposed work, they are entitled to consideration.

"In executing so stupendous an undertaking, salubrity of climate, and the means of feeding abundantly and economically so large a body of workmen as would be collected, are subjects which cannot be passed over without notice. With regard to the first, the writer can aver that, during four months that he was occupied between the Pacific and the Lake of Granada, with a party of forty individuals, there was not a man prevented by sickness from performing his daily labor, although continually sleeping at night in the

open air. On the lake, and in the river San Juan, with a large party, the men maintained their health well, although exposed to frequent rains in the latter. But when at the port (del Norte,) or near to it, sickness got among them, which was mainly attributable to the use, or rather abuse, of ardent spirits, and other excesses so frequently indulged in at such places. This change, however, is not assignable solely to indulgence in excesses, because San Juan is exposed to all the dangerous influences of climate and temperature peculiar to the Mosquito shore, and all the coast from Cape Gracias á Dios to Carthagena, beyond it.

"The population from the State of Nicaragua may be said not to extend south much beyond the environs of the town of Nicaragua, so that the line of survey, approaching it in no part nearer than four leagues, passed over a comparative wilderness, and consequently all provisions were supplied from that place. These are always to be had in abundance; and should circumstances require it, they could be drawn from other parts of the State to almost any extent. The principal articles of consumption are meat (beef), maize, frijoles, rice, plantains, and fruits, which can be furnished at moderate prices; as, for example, meat at $3\frac{1}{2}$, 4 or $4\frac{1}{2}$ reals the arroba of 25 pounds; (the real is equal to sixpence of English money;) maize varying according to seasons, 6, 8, or 10, seldom 12 reals, per fanega, which weighs about 300 pounds; frijoles and rice in similar proportions; plantains, which are universally used, especially by the laboring classes, are so plentiful that a mule-load of them, (two or three quintals,) can be had, throughout the year, for 2 or $2\frac{1}{2}$ reals; so that if a large number of workmen were to be collected in this direction, there would be found no difficulty in supplying them with all the ordinary necessaries of life.

"The price paid for labor during the survey was $\$7\frac{1}{2}$ per man per month, besides provisions, which, on an average, amounted to half a real a-day; but this was higher than

what was usually given for general field work, in consideration of the men being taken to a distance from their families, for an indefinite time. For work such as that in question, good native artisans would be scarce; but there would be no want of laboring hands, for the certainty and regularity of their pay would attract men not only from all parts of this, but from the adjoining States of Costa Rica, Honduras, and San Salvador also; while a judicious system of equitable regulations would insure their docility and submissiveness. The barbarism that has been attributed to this population, in the writings before alluded to, needs no other refutation than saying that the imputation is unfounded; nor is it, nor can it be, a supposable fact that the peasantry of one country should differ very much from that of the other adjoining it—the same language, habits, and customs being common to both."

CHAPTER II.

HISTORICAL OUTLINE OF NEGOTIATIONS IN RESPECT TO THE PROPOSED CANAL.

In the preceding chapter I have considered solely the question of the practicability of the projected interoceanic canal. The results, as affecting the commercial and political relations and interests of the United States, next claim attention. Before proceeding to their consideration, however, it will be interesting to notice, briefly, some of the measures which have heretofore been taken towards the construction of the proposed work.

Although its feasibility was asserted early in the 16th century, nothing was practically attempted until late in the 18th century, when the attention of the Spanish Government was called to the subject once more by Godoy, "the Prince of Peace," and a survey of the route was made under his direction. The documents relating to it still exist in the archives of Guatemala. After the independence of Central America, another attempt toward the accomplishment of the same object was made by Señor Manual Antônio de la Cerda, afterwards Governor of the State of Nicaragua, who, in July 1823, urged the matter upon the Federal Congress, but failed in accomplishing anything at that time.

During the year 1824, however, various propositions were made from abroad, in respect to the enterprise. Amongst these was one from Messrs. Barclay & Co., of London, bearing date Sept. 18, 1824. They proposed to open a navigable communication between the two oceans, *via* the River San

Juan and Lake Nicaragua, without cost to the Government, provided the latter would extend the requisite assistance in other modes. On the 2d of Feb., 1825, other propositions were made, by some merchants of the United States, signed by Col. Chas. Bourke and Matthew Llanos, in which they observe that they had, in the month of December preceding, (1824), sent an armed brig to San Juan, having on board engineers and other persons charged to make a survey of the proposed route. They prayed, in consideration of the advances already made, and the evidences of good faith thus exhibited, that the Government would grant them, 1st, an exclusive proprietorship and control of the canal; 2d, an exclusive right of navigating the lakes and dependent waters by steam; 3d, free permission to use all natural products of the country, necessary for the work; 4th, exemption of duty on goods introduced by the Company, until the completion of the work. In return for this, they proposed that the Government should receive twenty per cent. on the tolls, and at the end of the term of ——— years, to surrender the entire work to the Government. Whether the armed brig, and the party of engineers referred to by these parties, ever reached their destination is unknown; nor is it known that the Government of Central America ever took any specific notice of these propositions.

The subject was nevertheless regarded as of primary interest throughout all Central America, and the Minister of that Republic in the United States, Señor Don Antonio Jose Cañas, was specially instructed to bring the matter prominently before the American Government. This he did in an official letter, bearing date Feb. 8, 1825, addressed to Henry Clay, then Secretary of State. In this letter, Sr. Cañas solicited the coöperation of the United States, on the ground "that its noble conduct had been a model and a protection to all the Americas," and entitled it to a preference over any other nation, both in the "merits and advantages of the

proposed great undertaking." He proposed also, by means of a treaty, "effectually to secure its advantages to the two nations." The Charge d' Affaires of the United States in Central America, Col. John Williams, was accordingly specially instructed to assure the Government of that country of the deep interest taken by the United States in an undertaking "so highly calculated to diffuse a favorable influence on the affairs of mankind," to investigate with the greatest care the facilities offered by the route, and to remit the information to the United States. But it appears no information of the character required ever reached the American Government.

During this year, however, (1825,) various proposals were made to the Government of Central America, from abroad, upon the subject; and in June of that year, the National Congress, with a view of determining the principles upon which it desired the work undertaken, passed a decree to the following purport:

"ARTICLE 1. Authorizes the opening of a Canal, fitted for the passage of the largest vessels, in the State of Nicaragua.

"ART. 2. The works to be of the most solid construction.

"ART. 3. The Government shall offer to the undertakers an indemnification equivalent to the cost and labor of the work.

"ART. 4. The Government shall use all means of facilitating the object; permitting the cutting of wood—assisting the Surveyors—forwarding the plans, and, generally, in every manner not injurious to public or private interests.

"ART. 5. No duty shall be charged on instruments and machinery imported for the works of the Canal.

"ART. 6. The expense of the work shall be acknowledged as a National Debt, and the tolls of the Canal shall be applied to its extinguishment, after deducting the necessary costs of maintenance and repairs, and the support of a garrison for its defence.

"ART. 7. Any dispute regarding its liquidation or proofs of outlay, shall be determined according to the laws of the Republic.

"ART. 8. The Congress shall be entitled to establish, and at all times alter, the rates of toll, as it may think proper.

"ART. 9. The navigation shall be open to all nations, friends or neutrals, without privilege or exclusion.

"ART. 10. The Government shall maintain on the Lake the necessary vessels for its defence.

"ART. 11. If invincible impediments, discovered in the course of the work, prevent its execution, the Republic shall not be liable to make any remuneration whatever.

"ART. 12. In case only a boat canal can be opened, the indemnification shall be proportioned to the smaller benefit which will then result to the Republic."

This decree was published jointly with another fixing six months for receiving proposals; but the term designated was too short for any measures to be taken on the part of companies or individuals, and the Congress only received a repetition of a part of the proposals before made.

The principal of these were made by Mr. Baily and Mr. Charles Beniski—the first as agent for the English house of Messrs. Barclay, Herring, Richardson & Co., and the second for Mr. Aaron H. Palmer, of New York. Mr. Baily's offer was conditional, while Mr. Beniski's was positive, and was therefore accepted by the Republic. The contractors, under the name and style of the "Central American and United States Atlantic and Pacific Canal Company," were bound to open through Nicaragua a canal navigable for vessels of all sizes, and to deposit in the city of Granada the sum of $200,000 for the preliminary expenses, within six months; to erect fortresses for the protection of the canal, and to have the works in progress within a period of twelve months. In compensation they were to have two thirds of the profits of the tolls upon the canal until all the capital expended in the work was repaid, with interest at the rate of ten per cent., beside afterwards receiving one-half of the proceeds of the canal for seven years, with certain privileges for introducing steam vessels. The Government was to put at their disposal all the documents relating to the subject existing in its

archives, to permit the cutting of wood, and to furnish laborers at certain rates of wages. In case of non-completion, the works were to revert unconditionally to the Republic. This contract bore date June 14, 1826, and the contractors at once endeavored to secure the coöperation of the Government of the United States. A memorial was presented to Congress, and referred to a Committee, which reported in due time; but here the matter stopped, although it appears to have received the sanction of De Witt Clinton and other distinguished men.

In fact, Mr. Palmer executed a deed of trust to Mr. Clinton, by which that gentleman, Stephen Van Renssalaer, C. D. Colden, Philip Hone, and Lynde Catlin, were constituted Directors of the work. Mr. Clinton's part was undertaken in entire good faith, and as he himself expressed it, "for the promotion of a great and good object, which should be kept free from the taint of speculation." Mr. Palmer went to England in 1827, to secure the coöperation of British capitalists in his enterprise; but owing to various untoward circumstances, his mission proved abortive, and in the autumn of that year he appears to have abandoned the undertaking.

Although the administration of Mr. Adams did not at once fall in with the proposition of the Central American Minister, it was not from a want of interest in the subject, but because it did not desire to commit the country to any specific course of conduct, until the feasibility of the enterprise and the leading facts connected with it should be better known and established. In the mean time the principles upon which it conceived the work should be undertaken and executed, are well exhibited in Mr. Clay's letter of instructions to the ministers of the United States, commissioned to the famous Congress of Panama. Mr. Clay said: "A canal for navigation between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, will form a proper subject of consideration at the Congress. That vast object, if it should ever be accomplished, will be inter-

esting, in a greater or less degree, to all parts of the world; but especially to this continent will accrue its greatest benefits; and to Colombia, Mexico, Central America, Peru, and the United States, more than to any other of the American nations. What is to redound to the advantage of all America should be effected by common means and united exertions, and not left to the separate and unassisted efforts of any one power. * * * If the work should ever be executed, so as to admit of the passage of sea vessels from one ocean to the other, the benefits of it ought not to be exclusively appropriated by any one nation, but should be extended to all parts of the globe, upon the payment of just compensation or reasonable tolls. * * You will receive and transmit to this government any proposals that may be made, or plans that may be suggested, for its joint execution, with assurances that they will be attentively examined, with an earnest desire to reconcile the interests and views of all the American nations." It will be seen that Mr. Clay, who was at that time a true exponent of the American system of policy, regarded the construction of this work as an enterprise peculiarly American, to be executed by the parties most deeply interested in it, to be under their control, but not therefore exclusive.

After the failure of Mr. Palmer's project, the whole matter seems to have been allowed to slumber until some time in October 1828, when the work was proposed to be undertaken by an Association of the Netherlands, under the special patronage of the King of Holland. In March 1829, General Verveer arrived in Guatemala, as Plenipotentiary of the King of the Netherlands, with instructions regarding the undertaking of the canal. In consequence of civil distractions, the subject was not taken up until the succeeding October, when commissioners were appointed to treat with Verveer, and on the 24th of July, 1830, the plan agreed upon between them was laid before the National Congress.

It was ratified on the 21st of September following. The principal features of the agreement were as follows:

1st. The proposed canal to be open on the same terms to all nations at peace with Central America; but vessels engaged in the slave trade, and all privateers, not to be allowed either to pass the canal or hover in the vicinity of its mouths.

2d. Armed ships not allowed to pass without the express consent of the Government of the Republic, and this permission never to be granted to a flag at war with any other nation.

3d. The Government to use all its endeavors to have the neutrality of the canal recognized by all maritime powers, as also that of the ocean for a certain extent around its mouths.

4th. The Republic to make no charge for the land used by the canal, or the raw materials used for its construction; nor to impose taxes on persons employed in the work, who were to be under the protection of the agents of the country to which they might belong.

5th. The work to be of sufficient dimensions to admit the largest ships; and the execution to be left entirely to the parties undertaking it, and to be made wholly at their expense.

6th. The interest on the capital expended to be ten per cent., and as security for both capital and interest, a mortgage to be granted upon the lands for a league on both sides of the canal.

7th. The canal to remain in the hands of the contractors, until it had paid cost of construction and repairs, with ten per cent. annual interest thereon, and also until it had paid three millions of dollars, to be advanced as a loan to the Government, and then to revert unconditionally to the Republic.

8th. The rate of tolls to be regulated by the Government and contractors jointly, but always in such a manner as to give it a decided advantage over Cape Horn.

9th. A free commercial city to be founded on the banks, or at one of the entrances of the canal, which, while enjoying entire freedom of trade, religious tolerance, a municipal government, trial by jury, and exemption from military service, to constitute nevertheless a part of the Republic, and to be under the special protection thereof.

10th. In respect to navigation and commerce generally, the Netherlands to be put upon a footing of equality with the United States.

Arrangements were accordingly made to send envoys to the Netherlands, with full powers to perfect the plan; and,

for a time, the work seemed in a fair way to a commencement; but the revolution of Belgium and the separation of Holland put an end to these hopes. The news of these events was received with profound regret. Mr. Henry Savage, U. S. Consul, in a letter to Mr. Van Buren, dated Guatemala, December 3, 1830, said: "All concur, and every one now seems tacitly to look forward to the United States for the completion of this grand project. They say that the United States, identified in her institutions with this Government, ought to have the preference."

In 1832 endeavors were made to renew the negotiations with Holland, and the State of Nicaragua passed resolutions agreeing to the propositions of the Dutch Envoy, but nothing was accomplished.

Upon the 3d of March, 1835, public attention having again been directed to the subject, a resolution passed the Senate of the United States, "that the President be requested to consider the expediency of opening negotiations with the Governments of other nations, and particularly with the Governments of Central America and New Granada, for the purpose of effectually protecting, by suitable treaty stipulations with them, such individuals or companies as may undertake to open a communication from the Atlantic to the Pacific Ocean, by means of a ship canal across the isthmus which connects North and South America, and of securing for ever, by means of such stipulations, the free and equal right of navigating such canal to all nations, on the payment of such reasonable tolls as may be established to compensate the capitalists who may engage in such undertaking and complete the work."

Under this resolution, a special agent, (Mr. Charles Biddle,) was appointed by General Jackson, to proceed without delay, by the most direct route, to the port of San Juan de Nicaragua, ascend the river San Juan to the Lake of Nicaragua, and thence proceed across the continent, by the contemplated

route of the proposed canal or railroad, to the Pacific Ocean; after which examination, he was directed to repair to Guatemala, the capital of the Republic, and, with the aid of Mr. De Witt, the Charge d'Affaires of the United States, procure all such public documents connected with the subject as might be in existence, and especially copies of all such laws as had been passed, and contracts and conventions as had been made, to carry into effect the undertaking, and also all plans, surveys, or estimates in relation to it. From Guatemala he was directed to proceed to Panama, and make observations and inquiries relative to the proposed connection of the two oceans at that point. Unfortunately, from the difficulties of procuring conveyances to San Juan, the agent went to Panama first. From adverse circumstances, he never reached Nicaragua, and died soon after his return to the United States. He nevertheless made a partial report concerning the Isthmus of Panama, to the effect that it was not practicable for a canal.

In 1837, the subject was again taken up in Central America, by General Morazan, who resolved to have the proposed line of the canal properly surveyed, intending to raise a loan in Europe for the execution of the work. Mr. John Baily was employed for the former purpose, but his work was brought to a sudden close by the dissolution of the Government of the Republic. He nevertheless made a survey of the narrow isthmus intervening between Lake Nicaragua and the Pacific, and also some observations on the River San Juan.

In 1838 a convention was made between the States of Nicaragua and Honduras, under which Mr. Peter Rouchaud was authorized to conclude an agreement in France, for the formation of a company to make a canal, and for other objects; but he effected nothing. The same result attended the efforts of Señor Don George Viteri, subsequently Bishop of San Salvador, who was sent Ambassador to Rome.

In the same year Mr. George Holdship, representing a company composed chiefly of citizens of the United States, residing in New Orleans and New York, among whom was Mr. Soulé of the former city, arrived in Central America, with a view of contracting for the opening of the canal with the General Government. Finding that Nicaragua had "pronounced" against Morazan, and assumed an independent position, he proceeded to that State, where he at once entered into a contract, which provided for opening the canal, for the establishment of a bank to assist the enterprise, and for colonization on an extensive scale. He returned to the United States, and the matter ended.

This year was also signalized by some further movements on the subject, in the United States. A petition was presented to Congress, signed by several citizens of New York and Philadelphia, viz., Aaron Clark, Wm. A. Duer, Herman Leroy, Matthew Carey, and Wm. Radcliff, setting forth that the wants of trade required the opening of a ship communication between the Atlantic and Pacific; that the accumulation of wealth amongst nations and the prevalence of peace seemed to indicate a favorable opportunity for the undertaking; and recommending "that an extensive and powerful combination should be formed, and the most judicious and liberal measures adopted, for the purpose of carrying the plan into effect, and securing its benefits permanently to the world at large." This memorial was referred to a committee, of which the Hon. Chas. F. Mercer was Chairman, who, March 2, 1839, made a report upon it, concluding with the following resolution, which was adopted:

"*Resolved*, That the President of the United States be requested to consider the expediency of opening or continuing negotiations with the governments of other nations, and particularly with those the territorial jurisdiction of which comprehends the Isthmus of Panama, and to which the United States have accredited ministers or agents, for the purpose of ascertaining or effecting a communication between the Atlantic and

Pacific Oceans, by the construction of a ship canal; and of securing forever, by suitable treaty stipulations, the free and equal right of navigating such canal to all nations, on the payment of reasonable tolls."

The subsequent action, both of the Executive and Congress, was directed to the opening of a route across the Isthmus of Panama, and resulted in the negotiation of a treaty between the United States and New Granada, by which the neutrality of the Isthmus was guarantied by the former, in consideration of a free transit conceded by the latter. Under this treaty, the existing Panama Railroad Company was organized, and that route of communication between the two oceans placed in American hands.

The disturbances incident to the dissolution of the Republic of Central America precluded any serious attention to the project of a canal, from 1838 until 1844, when Señor Don Francisco Castellon, having been appointed Minister from Nicaragua to France, and failing to interest that Government, entered into a contract with a Belgian company, under the auspices of the Belgian King, for the construction of the work. The grant was for sixty years, at the end of which time it was to revert to the State without indemnity, the State receiving meantime an interest of ten per cent. in the profits.

Still later, in April, 1846, a contract was made by Mr. Marcoleta, Nicaraguan Charge d' Affaires to Belgium, with Louis Napoleon Bonaparte, then a prisoner at Ham, which differed but little from the preceding one, except that the canal was to be called "*Canal Napoleon de Nicaragua.*" Beyond the publication of a pamphlet upon the subject, under the initials of Bonaparte, this attempt also proved abortive.

So the matter rested until 1849, when the acquisition of California by the United States, and the discovery there of vast mineral wealth, again directed public attention to the project, in a more serious manner than at any previous

period. It now began to assume a practical form, and, as a consequence, there was a renewal of propositions to the Government of Nicaragua. The first of these, in the form of bases subject to future adjustment, came, under date of 16th of February, from Mr. William Wheelwright, the projector of the British line of steamers on the western coast of South America, upon behalf of an English company. It embodied, substantially, the provisions of the contract of 1844 with the Belgian company, but was never acted upon by the Nicaraguan Government.

The second was in the form of a detailed contract, and was entered into between Mr. D. T. Brown, representing certain citizens of New York, and General Muñoz, Commissioner of the Nicaraguan Government, on the 14th of March, 1849. It, however, never received the sanction of the Executive, nor was it ratified by the company within the time stipulated by its terms.

In the meantime, however, namely, as early as January 1848, when it became evident that the Mexican war could only terminate in large territorial acquisitions to the United States, the Port of San Juan de Nicaragua, the only possible eastern terminus of the proposed canal, was seized by Great Britain, under the pretext of supporting the territorial rights of a savage, facetiously styled "King of the Mosquitos." This act could not be viewed with indifference by the Government of our own country; for it not only violated the principle constantly recognized and asserted by the United States, that the routes of transit between the two oceans should be free to the whole world, uncontrolled by any great maritime power, but it violated also a principle early and well established amongst the American nations, namely, the exclusion of all foreign, and especially monarchical, interference from the domestic and international affairs of this continent. The real purpose of the seizure of San Juan was too apparent to escape detection; and the Government of the

United States, upon these principles, would have been bound to interpose against the consummation of the felony. But it was specially bound to interpose, after it had been earnestly and repeatedly solicited to do so by the injured Republic in question. These solicitations were forcibly made, in letters addressed to the President of the United States by the Supreme Director of Nicaragua, dated Dec. 15, 1847, as also in letters from the Secretary of State of that Republic, of the dates respectively of Nov. 12, 1847, and March 17, 1848. "The obvious design of Great Britain," said the Director of Nicaragua, "in seizing upon the Port of San Juan, and setting up pretensions to sovereignty, in behalf of savage tribes, within the territories of Nicaragua, is to found colonies, and to make herself master of the prospective interoceanic canal, for the construction of which this Isthmus alone has the requisites of feasibility and facility."

Although the matter was thus brought before the American Government, it does not seem to have elicited any action beyond certain instructions from Mr. Buchanan, then Secretary of State, to Mr. Hise, appointed Charge d'Affaires to Central America. "The object of Great Britain in this seizure," said Mr. Buchanan, "is evident from the policy which she has uniformly pursued throughout her history, of seizing upon every valuable commercial point in the world, whenever circumstances have placed it in her power. Her purpose probably is to obtain the control of the route for a railroad and canal between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, by way of Lake Nicaragua." But while insisting upon the policy of "excluding all interference on the part of European Governments in the domestic affairs of the American Republics," Mr. Buchanan gave no specific instructions as to the line of conduct to be pursued by Mr. Hise, in respect to the proposed canal or the British usurpation. He confined himself to a denial of the British pretensions, and concluded by observing that "the Government of the United States has

not yet determined what course it will pursue in regard to the encroachments of the British Government."

About this time, viz., under date of April 4, 1849, Mr. Manning, British Vice Consul in Nicaragua, wrote to Lord Palmerston as follows:

"My opinion, if your lordship will allow me to express it, as regards this country for the present, is, that it will be overrun by American adventurers, and consequently bring on Her Majesty's Government disagreeable communications with that of the United States, which possibly might be avoided by an immediate negotiation with Mr. Castillon for a *protectorate and transit favorable to British interests.* * * The welfare of my country, and the desire of its *obtaining the control of so desirable a spot in the commercial world,* and free it from the competition of so adventurous a race as the North Americans, induces me to address your lordship with such freedom."

Upon his arrival in Central America, Mr. Hise became speedily convinced that the whole scope of British policy in that country was directed to acquiring permanent control of the Nicaraguan isthmus. Deeply impressed with the importance to the United States of a free transit across it, although not empowered to treat with Nicaragua, he nevertheless conceived himself authorized, under the circumstances, in opening negotiations with the Government of that Republic.[1] He therefore requested the appointment of a commissioner for that purpose, to meet him in Guatemala, where, upon the 21st of June, 1849, a special convention relating to this subject, was agreed upon. The provisions of this convention, it

[1] "I was induced with all possible despatch to conclude this treaty, because I had information, from authentic sources, that English companies were endeavoring to procure for themselves the privileges which I have thus secured, and that the British Government, by encroachments and aggressions at the mouth and on the borders of the river San Juan, designed to so embarrass the subject, and to present such obstacles in the way, as to defeat altogether the project of making a ship canal between the two oceans."—*Mr. Hise to the Secretary of State.*

is not to be denied, were, in some respects, extraordinary, and not in entire harmony with the established exterior policy of the United States. It provided,

1st. That the United States should enjoy the perpetual right of way through the territories of Nicaragua, by any means of conveyance then existing or which might thereafter be devised.

2d. That the United States, or a company chartered by it, might construct a railroad or canal from one ocean to the other, and occupy such lands and use such natural materials and products of the country as might be necessary for the purpose.

3d. That the United States should have the right to erect such forts on the line, or at the extremities of the proposed work, as might be deemed necessary or proper for its protection.

4th. That the vessels and citizens of all nations at peace with both contracting powers might pass freely through the canal.

5th. That a section of land two leagues square at either termination should be set apart to serve as the sites of two free cities, under the protection of both governments, the inhabitants of which should enjoy complete municipal and religious freedom, trial by jury, exemption from all military duty, and from taxation, etc., etc.

5th. That in return for these and other concessions, which it is unnecessary to enumerate, the United States should defend and protect Nicaragua, her territorial rights, her sovereignty, preserve the peace and neutrality of her coasts, etc., etc., which guarantees were to extend to any community of States of which Nicaragua might voluntarily become a member.

But while Mr. Hise was thus occupied in Central America, the administration of General Taylor had been inaugurated. The affairs of that country attracted his immediate attention. The letters addressed by the Government of Nicaragua to Mr. Polk and Mr. Buchanan, and which had remained unanswered, were replied to in the friendliest spirit; and before the expiration of the first month of General Taylor's term of office, Mr. Hise was recalled, and the writer of these pages appointed, in his stead, as Charge d'Affaires of the United States to Guatemala, besides receiving special commissions to the other States of Central America, with full powers to

treat with them separately, on all matters affecting their relations with this Republic. It will be seen, therefore, that Mr. Hise was not only not empowered to treat with Nicaragua, but also that his negotiations were undertaken after the date of his letter of recall, which, however, failed to reach him until after the signing of the special convention, and after my arrival in the country. Under these circumstances, and having meantime determined upon a specific line of policy; this convention was neither approved by the American Government, nor accepted by that of Nicaragua.

The spirit in which the matter was taken up by the administration of General Taylor, and the principles upon which its action was predicated, are fully and clearly exhibited in the following passages from the instructions addressed to me by Mr. Clayton, Secretary of State. After disproving, in an unanswerable manner, the pretensions of Great Britain on the Mosquito shore, Mr. Clayton submits the following significant question, and equally significant reply:

"Will other nations interested in a free passage to and from the Pacific, by the river San Juan and Lake Nicaragua, tamely allow that interest to be thwarted by the pretensions of Great Britain? As regards the United States, the question may be confidently answered in the negative.

"Having now," continues the Secretary of State, "sufficiently apprised you of the views of the Department in regard to the title to the Mosquito Coast, I desire you to understand how important it is deemed by the President, so to conduct all our negotiations on the subject of the Nicaraguan passage as not to involve this country in any entangling alliances on the one hand, or any unnecessary controversy on the other. We desire no monopoly of the right of way for our commerce, and we cannot submit to it if claimed for that of any other nation. If we held and enjoyed such a monopoly, it would entail upon us more bloody and expensive wars than the struggle for Gibraltar has caused to England and Spain. The same calamity would infallibly be cast upon any other nation claiming to exclude the commerce of the rest of the world. We only ask an equal right of passage for all nations on the same terms—a passage unincumbered by oppressive restrictions, either from the local Government

within whose sovereign limits it may be effected, or from the proprietors of the canal when accomplished. To this end we are willing to enter into treaty stipulations with the Government of Nicaragua, that both Governments shall protect and defend the proprietors who may succeed in cutting the canal and opening water communication between the two oceans for our commerce. Without such protection, it is not believed this great enterprise would ever be successful. Nicaragua is a feeble State, and capitalists, proverbially a timid race, may apprehend from the rapacity of great maritime powers the obstruction and even the seizure of the canal. Similar apprehensions on their part, from revolutions in the local government, from the oppressions and exactions of temporary chieftains, and from causes not necessary to be explained, may operate to retard a work in regard to which it may be safely predicted, that, when successfully accomplished, its benefits to mankind will transcend those of any similar work known in the history of the world. All these apprehensions may and will be removed by the solemn pledge of protection given by the United States, and especially when it is known that our object in giving it is not to acquire for ourselves any exclusive or partial advantages over other nations. Nicaragua will be at liberty to enter into the same treaty stipulations with any other nation that may claim to enjoy the same benefits and will agree to be bound by the same conditions. In desiring that our citizens may obtain the charter or grant of the right to make the canal, we do not mean to be misunderstood. Our purpose, in aiding American citizens to obtain the grant, is to encourage them in a laudable effort; relying, as their own Government does, more on their skill and enterprise than on those of others. If they themselves prefer to unite with their own the capital of foreigners, who may desire to embark in the undertaking, this Government will not object to that. We should naturally be proud of such an achievement as an American work; but if European aid be necessary to accomplish it, why should we repudiate it, seeing that our object is as honest as it is openly avowed, to claim no peculiar privileges, no exclusive right, no monopoly of commercial intercourse, but to see that the work is dedicated to the benefit of mankind, to be used by all on the same terms with us, and consecrated to the enjoyment and diffusion of the unnumbered and inestimable blessings which must flow from it to all the civilized world. You will not want arguments to induce Nicaragua to enter into such a treaty with us. The canal will be productive of more benefit to her than any other country of the same limits. With the aid of the treaty it may—without such protection from some power equal to our own it cannot—be accomplished. Let your negotiations with her be frank, open, and unreserved, as to all of our purposes.

"The same reasons for our interference must be avowed to the capitalists who engage in the work. Before you treat for their protection, look well to their contract with Nicaragua. See that it is not assignable to others; that no exclusive privileges are granted to any nation that shall agree to the same treaty stipulations with Nicaragua; that the tolls to be demanded by the owners are not unreasonable or oppressive; that no power be reserved to the proprietors of the canal, or their successors, to extort at any time henceforth, or unjustly to obstruct or embarrass the right of passage. This will require all your vigilance and skill. If they do not agree to grant us passage on reasonable and proper terms, refuse our protection and countenance to procure the contract from Nicaragua. If a charter or grant of the right of way shall have been incautiously or inconsiderately made before your arrival in the country, seek to have it properly modified to answer the ends we have in view."

Upon arriving in Nicaragua, I found there a gentleman representing Mr. Cornelius Vanderbilt and his associates, citizens of New York, the object of whose mission was to procure a charter or grant for the construction of a canal through the territories of that Republic. Having previously entertained so many projects for the accomplishment of this object, all of which had failed, the Government of Nicaragua was indisposed to listen to any further propositions, until it was assured, as I was authorized to assure it, that the American Government was willing to extend its guarantees to any charter, of a proper character, which might now be granted. Under the confidence inspired by this assurance, it proceeded with alacrity to arrange the terms of a charter, more liberal than any ever before conceded, which was signed on the 27th of August, 1849, and ratified on the 23d of the month following.

The terms of this grant are very well known; yet the following synopsis of its provisions will not prove out of place in this connection. It provides,

1st. That the American Atlantic and Pacific Ship Canal Company may construct a ship canal, at its own expense, from the Port of San Juan, or

any more feasible point on the Atlantic, to the Port of Realejo, or any other point within the territories of the Republic, on the Pacific, and make use of all lands, waters, or natural materials of the country, for the enterprise.

2d. The dimensions of the canal shall be sufficiently great to admit vessels of all sizes.

3d. The grant is for the period of eighty-five years from the completion of the work; the preliminary surveys to be commenced within twelve months; the work to be completed in twelve years, unless unforeseen events, such as earthquakes or wars, shall intervene to prevent it; if not completed within that time, the charter to be forfeit, and whatever work may have been done to revert to the State; at the end of eighty-five years the work to revert to the State, free from all indemnity for the capital invested; the Company, nevertheless, to receive fifteen per cent. annually of the net profits, for ten years thereafter, if the entire cost shall not exceed $20,000,000; but if it does exceed that sum, then it shall receive the same per centage for twenty years thereafter.

4th. The Company to pay to the State ten thousand dollars upon the ratification of the contract, and ten thousand dollars annually, until the completion of the work; also, to give to the State two hundred thousand dollars of stock in the canal, upon the issue of stock; the State to have the privilege of taking five hundred thousand dollars of stock in the enterprise; to receive, for the first twenty years, twenty per cent. annually out of the net profits of the canal, after deducting the interest on the capital actually invested, at the rate of seven per cent.; and also to receive twenty-five per cent. thereafter, until the expiration of the grant.

5th. The Company to have the exclusive right of navigating the interior waters of the State by steam, and the privilege, within the twelve years allowed for constructing the canal, of opening any land or other route or means of transit or conveyance across the State; in consideration of which, the Company shall pay, irrespective of interest, ten per cent. of the net profits of such transit to the State, and transport, both on such route, and on the canal, when finished, the officers of the Government and its employees, when required to do so, free of charge.

6th. The canal to be open to the vessels of all nations, subject only to certain fixed and uniform rates of toll, to be established by the Company, with the sanction of the State, graduated to induce the largest and most extended business by this route; these rates not to be altered without six months previous notice, both in Nicaragua and the United States.

7th. The contract, and the rights and privileges conceded by it, to be held inalienably by the individuals composing the Company.

8th. All disputes to be settled by referees or commissioners, to be appointed in a specified manner.

9th. All machinery and other articles introduced into the State for the use of the Company, to enter free of duty; and all persons in its employ to enjoy all the privileges of citizens, without being subjected to taxation or military service.

10th. The State concedes to the Company, for purposes of colonization, eight sections of land on the line of the canal, in the valley of the River San Juan, each six miles square, and at least three miles apart, with the right of alienating the same, under certain reservations; all settlers on these lands to be subject to the laws of the country, being, however, exempt for ten years from all taxes, and also from all public service, as soon as each colony shall contain fifty settlers.

11th. "Art. xxxvi. It is expressly stipulated that the citizens, vessels, products, and manufactures of *all nations* shall be permitted to pass upon the proposed canal through the territories of Nicaragua, subject to no other nor higher duties, charges, or taxes, than shall be imposed upon those of the United States; *provided always*, that such nations shall first enter into the same treaty stipulations and guarantees, respecting said canal, as may be entered into between the State of Nicaragua and the United States."

The article providing that the contract shall be held inalienably by the individuals of the Company, was drawn up by myself, to guard against the probability of its being made a mere cloak for stock gambling. It originally provided that the Canal Company should "not become dependent upon, or connected with, any other company, whatever its objects." The latter provision was left out, at the solicitation of the Company, when the contract was subsequently modified.

Article xxxvi., which is quoted in full, was also drawn up by myself, and its insertion insisted on, in conformity with my instructions. The simple object was, to put upon the same footing with the United States every nation which should undertake the same obligations with ourselves, in respect to the proposed work. These obligations were distinctly set forth in the Treaty of Commerce and Friendship

which was negotiated, simultaneously, with the Nicaraguan Government, and which, in Article xxxv., provided as follows:

"ARTICLE XXXV.

"It is and has been stipulated, by and between the high contracting parties—

"1st. That the citizens, vessels, and merchandise of the United States shall enjoy in all the ports and harbors of Nicaragua, upon both oceans, a total exemption from all port-charges, tonnage or anchorage duties, or any other similar charges now existing, or which may hereafter be established, in manner the same as if said ports had been declared Free Ports. And it is further stipulated, that the right of way or transit across the territories of Nicaragua, by any route or upon any mode of communication at present existing, or which may hereafter be constructed, shall at all times be open and free to the Government and citizens of the United States, for all lawful purposes whatever; and no tolls, duties, or charges of any kind shall be imposed upon the transit in whole or part, by such modes of communication, of vessels of war, or other property belonging to the Government of the United States, or on public mails sent under the authority of the same, or upon persons in its employ, nor upon citizens of the United States, nor upon vessels belonging to them. And it is also stipulated that all lawful produce, manufactures, merchandise, or other property belonging to citizens of the United States, passing from one ocean to the other, in either direction, for the purpose of exportation to foreign countries, shall not be subject to any import or export duties whatever; or if citizens of the United States, having introduced such produce, manufactures, or merchandise into the State of Nicaragua, for sale or exchange, shall, within three years thereafter, determine to export the same, they shall be entitled to drawback equal to four fifths of the amount of duties paid upon their importation.

"2d. And inasmuch as a contract was entered into on the twenty-seventh day of August, 1849, between the Republic of Nicaragua and a company of citizens of the United States, styled the 'American Atlantic and Pacific Ship Canal Company,' and in order to secure the construction and permanence of the great work thereby contemplated, both high contracting parties do severally and jointly agree to protect and defend the above-named Company in the full and perfect enjoyment of said work, from its inception to its completion, and after its completion, from any acts of invasion, forfeiture, or violence, from whatever quarter the same may

proceed; and to give full effect to the stipulations here made, and to secure for the benefit of mankind the uninterrupted advantages of such communication from sea to sea, the United States distinctly recognizes the rights of sovereignty and property which the State of Nicaragua possesses in and over the line of said canal, and for the same reason guaranties, positively and efficaciously, the entire neutrality of the same, so long as it shall remain under the control of citizens of the United States, and so long as the United States shall enjoy the privileges secured to them in the preceding section of this article.

"3d. But if, by any contingency, the above-named 'American Atlantic and Pacific Ship Canal Company' shall fail to comply with the terms of their contract with the State of Nicaragua, all the rights and privileges which said contract confers shall accrue to any Company of citizens of the United States which shall, within one year after the official declaration of failure, undertake to comply with its provisions, so far as the same may at that time be applicable, provided the company thus assuming said contract shall first present to the President and Secretary of State of the United States satisfactory assurances of their intention and ability to comply with the same; of which satisfactory assurances the signature of the Secretary of State and the seal of the Department shall be complete evidence.

"4th. And it is also agreed, on the part of the Republic of Nicaragua, that none of the rights, privileges, and immunities guarantied, and by the preceding articles, but especially by the first section of this article, conceded to the United States and its citizens, shall accrue to any other nation, or to its citizens, except such nation shall first enter into the same treaty stipulations, for the defence and protection of the proposed great interoceanic canal, which have been entered into by the United States, in terms the same with those embraced in section 2d of this article."

The provisions of this article were not only in conformity with my instructions, but their inevitable tendency and design was, to make it to the interest of every nation in the world to maintain the neutrality of the canal, and the independence and territorial integrity of Nicaragua. They secured to the United States every desirable privilege in her intercourse, commercial or otherwise, with Nicaragua; yet those privileges were in no wise exclusive; they would accrue to every other nation, upon the same conditions; con-

ditions to which no nation except England could possibly object, and she only in the event of insisting upon her preposterous pretensions on what is called the Mosquito Shore.

And this is precisely the reason why the treaty containing this article was met by the unqualified hostility of the British Government; it placed England in a position of antagonism to the whole world, and made it to the interest of every maritime country that she should relinquish her hold on San Juan. To avoid the alternative which the consummation of this treaty would impose, the utmost efforts of her diplomacy were put forth to defeat its acceptance by the contracting parties. In Nicaragua these efforts signally failed; the treaty was unanimously ratified by the Legislative Chambers, simultaneously with the Canal Contract, on the 23d of September, 1849. It was at once despatched to the United States, approved by General Taylor and his Cabinet, and submitted, in conformity with the requirements of the Constitution, to the Senate for its ratification. It reached that body at an unfortunate period, when Congress was distracted with questions growing out of the existence of slavery in the United States, and, for this and other reasons, did not receive immediate attention.

Meantime the nation was shocked by the death of Gen. Taylor. This event was followed by the installation of a new Cabinet, and a general change in the foreign policy of the Government—a policy eminently distinguished as having been clear, bold, and decided, worthy of a country holding the first rank amongst nations. The British Envoy at Washington, deeming the opportunity favorable for his purpose, redoubled his exertions to procure the rejection of the treaty, or its essential modification, so as to do away with the alternative, so fatal to British designs, which its terms imposed. Communication after communication reached the State Department from this zealous and active officer, in which the circumstance that Gen. Taylor's administration

condescended to enter into treaty relations with Nicaragua, was abundantly ridiculed, and the feeble Government of Nicaragua, in its *personnel*, as in its powers and purposes, not only ridiculed as ignorant, weak, and poor, but unsparingly denounced as faithless and corrupt. One of these letters, subsequently communicated by Mr. Webster to the Committee of Foreign Relations of the Senate, contained Mr. Bulwer's substitute for the obnoxious article in question; the acceptance of which substitute, by the American Government, was urged upon every ground, and by every appeal, likely to influence the officer to whom it was addressed.

It is not my purpose to pursue this historical relation further, or to recount the proceedings which followed on these extraordinary movements of the British Envoy. They will constitute a singular, and very interesting, perhaps astounding, chapter, in the history of our Foreign Relations. It is enough to know that Congress adjourned without action upon the treaty; that a subsequent session passed with the same result; and that up to this time nothing has been done to vindicate our broken faith to Nicaragua, or retrieve the national honor, impaired by the failure to fulfill our portion of the compact entered into with her, in the summer of 1849.

It should, however, be mentioned, in order to complete this *resumé* of proceedings connected with the proposed canal, that a convention, generally known as the "Clayton and Bulwer Treaty," was concluded between the United States and Great Britain, April 19, 1850, and proclaimed in July of the same year, which provided, in general terms, for the joint protection of that work by the contracting powers. It stipulates:

1st. That neither party "will ever obtain or maintain for itself any exclusive control over" this canal, or erect fortifications commanding the same or in its vicinity, "or occupy or colonize, or assume or exercise dominion over Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito shore, or any part of Central America, nor *make use of any protection which either affords*, or *any alliance which either has or may have*," for the purpose of erecting, or for-

tifying, or colonizing the region above named, or any part of it, or for the purpose of "*assuming or exercising dominion over the same*," nor will either party make use of its relations with those countries to procure exclusive privileges for itself or its subjects in the proposed canal.

2d. Neither party will capture or detain the vessels of the other while passing through the canal, or while within —— distance of either of its extremities.

3d. To protect the parties undertaking the construction of the canal, from "unjust detention, seizure, or violence."

4th. To use their influence respectively to facilitate the work, and their good offices to procure the establishment of a free port at either end.

5th. To guaranty the neutrality of the canal, so long as the proprietors shall not make unfair discriminations on vessels in transit, or impose unreasonable tolls; to enter into treaties with the Central American States to promote the work; to interpose their good offices to settle all disputes concerning it, etc., etc.

6th. Both governments to lend their support to such company as shall first present evidences of its intention and ability to undertake the work, with the consent of the local governments; *one year* to be allowed from the date of the ratification of the convention, for the company now in existence to "*present evidence of sufficient capital subscribed to accomplish the undertaking*," it being understood that if, in that time, no such evidence shall be presented, then both governments shall be at liberty to afford their protection to any person or company which shall then be prepared to commence and proceed with the work in question.

7th. The same general protection to extend to every practicable route of communication across the continent, on the same principles.

This treaty was ratified, less on the merits of the guaranty which it extended to the projected canal, than because it was understood to put an end to the obnoxious protectorate, amounting to absolute dominion, of Great Britain on the Mosquito shore. Such was the understanding of the treaty by Mr. Clayton, the negotiator on the part of the United States, who, in a despatch under date of May 7, 1850, said, in reference to it:

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, MAY 7, 1850.

* * * * "It is proper that I should now inform you that I have negotiated a treaty with Sir Henry Bulwer, the object of which is to se-

cure the protection of the British Government to the Nicaraguan Canal, and to liberate Central America from the dominion of any foreign power.

* * * * * * * * *

"I hope and believe that this treaty will prove equally honorable both to Great Britain and the United States, the more especially as it secures the weak sister Republics of Central America from foreign aggression. All other nations that shall navigate the canal will have to become guarantors of the neutrality of Central America and the Mosquito coast. The agreement is, 'not to erect or maintain any fortifications commanding the canal, or in the vicinity thereof; nor to occupy, fortify, colonize, or assume or exercise any dominion whatever over any part of Nicaragua, Costa Rica, the Mosquito coast, or Central America; nor to make use of any protection or alliance, for any of these purposes.'

"Great Britain having thus far made an agreement with us for the great and philanthropic purpose of opening the ship communication through the Isthmus, it will now be most desirable immediately after the ratification of the treaty, on both sides, that you should cultivate the most friendly relations with the British agents in that country, who will hereafter have to devote their energies and co-operation with ours, to the accomplishment of the great work designed by the treaty. Kindness and conciliation are most earnestly recommended by me to you. I trust that means will speedily be adopted by Great Britain to extinguish the Indian title, with the help of the Nicaraguans, or the Company, within what we consider to be the limits of Nicaragua. We have never acknowledged, and never can acknowledge, the existence of any claim of sovereignty in the Mosquito king, or any other Indian in America. To do so, would be to deny the title of the United States to our own territories. Having always regarded an Indian title as a mere right of occupancy, we can never agree that such a title should be treated otherwise than as a thing to be extinguished at the will of the discoverer of the country. Upon the ratification of the treaty, Great Britain will no longer have any interest to deny this principle, which she has recognized in every other case in common with us. Her protectorate will be reduced to a shadow—"*Stat nominis umbra*;" for she can neither occupy, fortify, nor colonize, or exercise dominion or control in any part of the Mosquito coast or Central America. To attempt to do either of these things, after the exchange of ratifications, would inevitably produce a rupture with the United States. By the terms neither party can occupy to protect, nor protect to occupy.

* * * * * * * * *

(Signed) JOHN M. CLAYTON."

This construction has been as explicitly denied by Mr. Bulwer, in his letters to Mr. Webster, in which he affirms that the convention was not designed to affect the position of Great Britain in respect to the Mosquito shore. He asks, substantially, why is there any reference to "protection" as existing, or as hereafter likely to exist, if the fact of the protectorate, and the right of a protectorate, were not recognized? We have agreed not to use this protectorate for the specific purpose of obstructing the proposed canal—nothing more!

This is not the place to discuss the correctness or fallacy of either construction; it is enough to know that the American construction has been practically negatived from the ratification of the treaty until this hour; that Great Britain has not only occupied San Juan, and exercised dominion over it, but still continues to do so, in a manner equally offensive to the United States and to Nicaragua.[1]

[1] On the 15th of August, 1850, the British Representative in Central America wrote to the Government of Nicaragua as follows:

"Instead of insisting on its supposed rights to the Mosquito shore, Nicaragua would best consult her interests by at once making good terms with England; for resistance in this matter will be of no further avail. It is impossible that Nicaragua should be ignorant of her Britannic Majesty's relation to the Mosquito question, as it has before it the letter of Viscount Palmerston, of the date of the 15th of April last, in which *he declares, in the most clear and direct terms, the utter impossibility of acceding to the pretensions of Nicaragua.* On the other hand, the treaty of Messrs. Clayton and Bulwer, about which you have so much to say, and in which you express so much confidence, *expressly recognizes the Mosquito Kingdom, and sets aside the rights which you pretend Nicaragua has on that coast.* The true policy for Nicaragua, is to undeceive herself in this respect, and to put no further confidence in the protestations or assurances of pretended friends, [viz. Americans.] It will be far better for her to come to an understanding without delay with Great Britain, on which nation depends not only the welfare and commerce of the State, but also the probability of accomplishing anything positive concerning interoceanic communication through her territories, because it is only in London that the necessary capital for such an enterprise can be found."

Again, on the 5th of December, 1850, the same officer wrote to the

The provisions of the treaty, in other respects, have been of no practical value. No company has presented evidences of its capability to carry out the enterprise of the canal; and consequently that styled "the American Atlantic and Pacific Ship Canal Company," cannot lay claim to the joint protection of the two governments, under the terms of the treaty; nor has it the guaranty of the United States, as provided for, by the, as yet, unratified treaty of 1849.

In respect to the practical operations of this Company very little is known, beyond the fact that, in July or August, 1850, a party of engineers, in its employ, sailed for Nicaragua, and has since made a survey of a line from Lake Nicaragua to the Pacific, not very far from that pursued by Galisteo and Baily,—less, probably, with a view to the construction of a canal, than to the opening of a transit road. The results of this survey are not before the public in an authentic form, nor is it known that any further surveys or other practical operations have been made by them, on any of the routes for a canal hitherto suggested. In fact, their operations seem to have been confined to the opening of a new route of transit for passengers to California; for which, as I have elsewhere said, the Isthmus of Nicaragua presents many important advantages. To this end they last year despatched a small steamer, called the "Director," which

Nicaraguan Government, informing it of the boundaries "*which Her Majesty's Government proposes to assert for the Mosquito King*," as follows:

"The undersigned, Her Britannic Majesty's Charge d'Affaires in Central America, with this view, has the honor to declare to the Minister of Foreign Relations of the Supreme Government of Nicaragua, that the general boundary line of the Mosquito territory begins at the northern extremity of the boundary line between the district of Tegucigalpa, in Honduras, and the jurisdiction of New Segovia; and after following the northern frontiers of New Segovia, it runs along the south-eastern limit of the district of Matagalpa and Chontales, and thence in an eastern course until it reaches the Machuca Rapids, on the river San Juan."

succeeded in reaching the Lake, where it is now plying. Other, and still smaller steamers, designed to run on the river, it is said, have also been sent out; a road has been opened from Lake Nicaragua to the Port of San Juan del Sur; and a line of ocean steamers to ply between New York and San Juan on the eastern coast of the continent, and San Juan del Sur and San Francisco, on the western, have commenced making regular voyages.

It is not certain whether the Government of Nicaragua will regard what has been done as a *bona fide* compliance, either with the spirit or the terms of the tenth article of the contract, which provides that the surveys *for the canal* shall be commenced within one year after the ratification of the contract. Still, looking to the advantages which may accrue to the country, from even a transit route through its territories, it may not insist upon a strict and technical compliance with the terms of the contract; it may even overlook the fatal vitiation of that contract, in consequence of the failure of the treaty in connection with which it was negotiated, upon which it depends, and without which it is of little or no value. That treaty afforded a guaranty of protection, and this was the prime condition upon which the concession was made. Its failure would afford just ground for a declaration of forfeiture; but whether or not that will be made, will doubtless depend much upon the future proceedings of the Company, now retaining their contract by sufferance alone.

Since the above was written, the Company here referred to despatched one of its own members to Nicaragua, with the view of procuring a separation of the privilege of exclusive steam-navigation, in the interior waters of the State, from the remainder of the canal contract, and to secure other additional privileges necessary to establish a monopoly of transit across the Nicaraguan Isthmus. This exclusive privilege

was principally conceded for the purpose of facilitating the construction of the canal; and not to organize a monopoly in the hands of any set of men. Accordingly, and regarding the attempt to procure this separation as covering a design to abandon the proposed canal, by securing independently all that could, for many years at least, prove of value, the Government of Nicaragua refused its assent. Political disturbances subsequently occurring, the constituted authorities of the State were overthrown, and two distinct Governments installed, one at Leon, another at Grenada.

It can hardly be supposed that any foreigner would be competent to decide which of these two Governments had the best claim to be regarded as legitimate. Yet the agent of the Canal Company, without waiting for the question of legitimacy, or the *de facto* predominance of one or the other to be determined, seized the moment of revolution to press his purposes with the parties claiming to constitute the Government at Grenada, and by promises of furnishing men and arms, by professions of unbounded influence with the British and American Governments, and by other representations equally fallacious, succeeded in procuring its consent to his purposes. The impropriety of negotiating under such circumstances and upon such grounds, is sufficiently obvious. No sooner did the Provincial Government at Leon hear of these proceedings, than it issued an order denouncing the whole proceedings of the Canal agent, and declaring his new charter null and void, as follows:

"The Provisional Supreme Government will see with satisfaction the interests of the aforesaid company arranged in harmony with those of this State when it shall have recovered its internal peace, and when its Government is qualified to enter upon affairs of this kind; but any negotiations concluded in the mean time are not authorized by it, nor will they be recognized as legal and subsisting. * * * *

CHAPTER III.

THE INTEROCEANIC CANAL, UNDER ITS COMMERCIAL AND POLITICAL ASPECTS.

It is, of course, impossible to calculate with anything more than approximate accuracy the advantages which, upon the score of economy alone, would result to the world from the construction of the proposed canal. Its general benefits to mankind, from the augmentation of commerce, the opening of new markets, the creation of new sources of demand, and the cheapening of all articles of import, with the consequent increase of manufactures and agricultural supplies, cannot be calculated by the narrow standard of dollars and cents. The employment which would, under the new era, be given to the overgrown and starving populations of Europe, the new fields which it would open to enterprise, and the diffusion of light, knowledge, and civilization which follows always upon any great improvement in the physical condition of mankind, and which increases with every saving of an hour's time, or a mile's distance in the communications between nations—all these are considerations which must lead the Statesman, the Philosopher, and the Philanthropist, to regard the proposed undertaking with deeper interest than any which has claimed the attention of mankind. The conjunction of time and circumstance is favorable for the work, and it now seems that the "star of empire," which, in its westward progress, stood still for awhile upon the crown of the Cordilleras, is destined to pass onward to its culmination, while the giant arm of

conjoined capital and labor smites through the barriers which nature has set up between two hemispheres.

These general considerations, however, are not those which are most likely to lead to the realization of the enterprise. Practical results follow only upon real wants; and even the mightiest schemes of ambition are seldom perfected, except when they harmonize with the tangible interests of the nations which cherish them. The requirements of Trade first directed the attention of men to the project of an interoceanic canal, and to these all political considerations and ideas of national aggrandisement are but secondary. Agriculture, manufactures, and commerce have come to be regarded as the standards of national greatness; they are the essential sources of wealth and power. These, in conjunction with her illimitable natural resources, and the activity, intelligence, and enterprise of her people, have made the United States what she now is, the most prosperous and the most powerful nation on the globe. Powerful, not in her army nor her war marine, but in the *ability* to organize both, when occasion shall require, on a grander and more efficient scale than the world has ever seen.

The proposed canal, therefore, first claims our attention under its commercial aspect. That its construction would prove generally advantageous to commerce is undoubted, but in what manner, and to what extent, is not well understood. I have alluded to the Eastern or Oriental Trade, as a great, if not the principal source of the wealth and power of the maritime nations of Europe. It was early supposed, and is still believed, that the opening of a ship canal across the American Isthmus, would prove highly beneficial to that trade, and to the nations enjoying it, both by shortening the distance and the time, between the Oriental and the European ports. Such, however, is not the fact; at any rate, not to the extent which has almost universally been supposed. Considered in reference to that trade, the United States will

derive the principal, if not sole advantages from the opening of the proposed canal; advantages solid and permanent, and which must materially affect her greatness and future destiny. Leaving entirely out of view the superiority, in every respect, of American ships and steamers over those of all other nations, and which, under equal conditions, would place the United States at the head of the commercial world, the advantages which would accrue from the canal, to the United States and England relatively, in respect of distance, in communicating with the centres of Oriental trade, are compendiously shown in the following table. The distances around Cape Horn are not included, because the route by the Cape of Good Hope is both shortest and quickest.

	Via Cape of Good Hope.	Via Proposed Canal.	Net Loss.	Net Gain.
From England				
To Canton	15,600	15,800	200	
" Calcutta	13,500	17,400	3,900	
" Singapore	14,300	16,600	2,300	
From New York				
To Canton	17,100	12,600	——	4,500
" Calcutta	15,000	14,000	——	1,000
" Singapore . . .	15,800	13,200	——	2,600

Relatively, therefore, and by the best of existing routes, England is now 1,700 miles nearer the centres of Asiatic trade than the Atlantic ports of the United States. Should the proposed canal be built, not only will this physical advantage be reversed, but those ports will be placed 3,000 miles nearer the Oriental markets than England. That is to say, the net gain to the United States would be not less than 4,500 miles; or calculating time, which is a better standard than distance, a gain of from twenty-five to thirty days.[1]

[1] "The Englishman meets the American, in all the markets of the world, except those of the Gulf and the Caribbean Sea, with the advantage of ten days and upwards.

"Notwithstanding this disadvantage, in their commercial race with

Again; in respect to the trade of the western coast of South America, and the Sandwich Islands, which is daily growing in importance, the advantages accruing to the United States would be, relatively, still greater.

	Via Cape Horn.	Via Proposed Canal.	Gain.
From England			
To Valparaiso	9,130	8,500	630
" Callao	10,600	7,000	3,600
" Sandwich Islands	14,500	8,500	6,000
From New York			
To Valparaiso	10,630	5,500	5,130
" Callao	12,100	4,000	8,100
" Sandwich Islands	16,000	5,500	10,500

In communicating with the Sandwich Islands, for instance, England has now an advantage, over the Atlantic States, of 1,500 miles in distance; build the canal, and these States have an advantage over England of 3,000 miles. If the comparison is made in respect to Callao and Valparaiso, the result is not less striking.[1]

Leaving out of view the circumstance, that our territories are no longer confined to the eastern coast of the Continent,

England, the United States have, for the last fifty years, been gradually gaining, until, at last, the contest has become so close that Great Britain is hardly a throat-latch ahead. Cut through the Isthmus, and the triumph will be complete. Instead, then, of meeting us in India, China, and even on our own Pacific coast, with the advantage of some ten day's sail or more, the scales will be turned, and we shall have the advantage of some twenty or thirty days, thus making a difference, under canvass, of thirty or forty days in our favor. Do you doubt, can any one doubt, the change which such a communication would produce in the commercial position of the two countries?"—*Lieut. Maury, Rep. Doc., 30th Cong. 1st Sess., No.* 145, *p*, 669.

[1] "There are eight millions of people inhabiting the Pacific Coast; all of them want things which we have to sell. They are four or five months removed from us: open a communication across the Continent, and it will bring them within an average distance of less than thirty days."—*Lieut. Maury, Ib.* p. 667.

and looking to the results simply as affecting the Eastern States of the Confederacy, still, under this limited aspect, the opening of the proposed canal must give the United States the control of the trade of South America and Asia, and make her the first commercial nation of the globe. But there are other circumstances which powerfully favor this grand result. There are but few persons, even here, in the midst of the activity which it has created, who comprehend the fact, that the second commercial city of this country, with its fleets of ships and steamers, laden with a wealth compared with which that of the old galleons of Spain was trifling, exists at this hour upon the Pacific coast, in the State of California. Fewer still comprehend the results which are to follow from this great fact. It points surely and irrevocably to American predominance in the Pacific. We no longer look eastward, across two continents, to the great markets of Asia; our ships need no longer stretch their long and dreary way around the Cape of Good Hope, but may spread their exultant wings across an ocean, henceforth tributary to us alone, direct to the land of silks, and teas, and spices. Already Britain has obtained the odium, and the United States the benefit, of the opening of the markets of China. The carrying trade from that empire to every part of the world, even under present circumstances, from the greater economy and speed of American ships, must fall into American hands. And before Europe shall dream of the possibility of the enterprise, American steamers will be found plying between Canton, and San Francisco, and Panama. The opening of the markets of Japan, and a triumphant competition with the world, in the islands of the Indies, will be a speedy and natural consequence. The future is big with results like these—results more than probable, irrespective of the projected ship canal, and inevitable if it should ever be constructed.

For, communication direct and rapid, between the Atlantic

and Pacific States of the Confederacy, is a political as well as a commercial necessity, and must be effected, at whatever cost or hazard. That a communication of this kind will be opened within our own territories, wholly within our control, and free from the possibility of foreign interruption, may be regarded as certain, even though it shall require the annexation of the entire continent, as far south as the Isthmus of Panama. But it is not supposed that this alternative will be forced upon the country; for within its present limits it seems probable that the facilities for such a communication do now exist. From the head of Matagorda bay on the Gulf of Mexico, and from the head of the navigable waters of the Arkansas River, to the Port of San Diego, in California, is a distance of but little more than a thousand miles. The intervening country, whatever may be its deficiencies in other respects, is, topographically, highly favorable for the construction of a railroad. Politically, so far as the transmission of intelligence, and, in case of war, of military forces and supplies, is concerned, such a work would, probably, be adequate to the requirements of the nation. And hence, while our commerce is gathering strength, and the means for opening a passage by water, from one sea to the other, are accumulating, the people of the United States will exercise only the simplest prevision, and most ordinary caution, in speedily constructing a work so essential, not less to their future safety, than their present wants.[1]

[1] In 1830, the tonnage of Great Britain ammounted to 2,500,000 tons; the tonnage of the United States to 1,200,000 tons. In 1850, the tonnage of Great Britain was, in round numbers, 4,000,000 tons; that of the United States 3,500,000 tons. This is exclusive of the internal commercial marine of the United States, which is eight or ten times as great as that of Great Britain, and which, if included, as it probably should be, in estimating the relative commercial importance of the two countries, already entitles the United States to the first place amongst nations. The increase of British tonnage, during the past twenty years, has, therefore, been but little more

As compared with the maritime nations of Europe, therefore, and in respect to what may be called the Asiatic trade, I repeat, the United States would be the principal, if not the sole gainer, by the construction of a ship canal across the Isthmus of Nicaragua. So far as that trade is concerned, it is clearly not to the interest of those nations, to have this work undertaken; and he who counts upon their coöperation in carrying it through, manifests his own ignorance, alike of their past and present policy. Individual capital, in this age of the world, seeks investment wherever there is a promise of profitable returns; political considerations yield to natural laws; and patriotism, with men collectively, weighs little against private interest. It is precisely this reason, which renders it a matter of indifference whether the maritime nations of Europe, influenced by considerations of policy, jealous of American prosperity, or fearful of American power, regard the proposed work with favor or disfavor; their concurrence is not necessary to its realization. The policy of the United States may safely be predicated upon these considerations; and the opening of the canal pursued as a simple question of individual, national interest.

than *fifty per cent.*; while the increase of American tonnage has been upwards of *one hundred and fifty per cent.* The repeal of the Navigation Laws of Great Britain, will probably prevent a parallel increase of English tonnage during the next ten years; while it will tend to augment the ratio of American increase. In 1860, the United States will be the first maritime nation of the globe—the greatest the world has ever seen.

The opening of the British carrying trade has already called into existence a class of vessels, which must speedily monopolize it for themselves; viz: the American Clipper Ships. In point of capacity and speed, they are unapproachable. In the recent trial between the "Reindeer," the *chef d' œuvre* of British skill, and the American clipper "Oriental," from London to Hong Kong, the "Oriental," made the passage in 117 days, the "Reindeer" in 130! National predilection cannot prevent freights from taking the course which is speediest and cheapest. The whole of the East India carrying trade must, therefore, speedily fall into our hands.

The cheap common-places about millennial fraternization amongst nations, from the lips of sleek ambassadors, may tickle the ears of credulous and maudlin "philanthropists," and be suited to the large liberality of after-dinner companies; but it can never delude the sound, practical sense of the nation.[1] The arts of Delilah were not called into requisition to deprive Samson of his strength, until the power of the Philistines was found unavailable against him; and the gilded links of triple treaties and "joint protectorates, for the general welfare of mankind," will not be bound upon the massive limbs of the Great Republic of the West, the ultimate Regenerator of the World, until its rulers become corrupted, and the eyes of its people blinded to their tangible interests. We require no exterior aid in the construction of the proposed work, except such as we shall receive *in spite* of the policy of foreign governments, and through the operations of those laws which now direct the movements of capital—the laws of dividends.

In unequivocal English, we are most deeply interested in this work; we can ourselves construct it; we need no concurrence except that of the people through whose territories

[1] Sir George Seymour, a veteran diplomatist of thirty years' standing, in his recent examination before the Salaries Committee of the British Parliament, testified: "I consider that giving dinners is an *essential part of diplomacy*; I have no hesitation in saying so. I have no idea of a man being a good diplomatist who does not give good dinners!" (*Minutes*, 2261). And Sir Richard Packenham testified, before the same committee, that while he was in the United States, his dinners were better than the President's! Complacent Sir Richard! The "essential part" of the expenses of some recent British Legations would form a curious commentary upon Sir George's candid admission,—not better, perhaps, than the item which is denominated "Secret or Contingent Service!" There are other veteran diplomatists besides Sir George Seymour, and there are very great men among us, whose conduct, "on golden hinges turning," would greatly confirm Sir George's estimate of the diplomatic value of "good dinners!"

it must pass, and this we have in the fullest acceptation of the term. We wish its construction upon no narrow basis; we need no exclusive control over it, in order to secure its benefits, even though it were our desire to monopolize them, for they must accrue, if not to us alone, yet so largely in our favor, that no competition can either deprive us of them, or materially diminish their value. We have therefore nothing to fear from exterior opposition, nor to gain from foreign partnerships. The interest manifested by European governments in the international affairs of this continent, is wholly impertinent; it has its origin in fear and jealousy, and is directed to the sole object of crippling our strength,—not by force, for that would but knit the limbs and develop the muscles of the young giant, but by the specious and dangerous arts of diplomacy. It is easy for one nation to stipulate to refrain from doing what she could not do if she would, if thereby she binds her neighbor to abstain from doing what is not only feasible for her, but important to her prosperity and greatness. The skill of the ambassador who succeeds in seducing a great nation into the commission of such folly, is poorly recompensed by the paltry honor of knighthood.[1]

[1] An instance of this species of tactics, in which the old dodge of making a virtue of necessity is resorted to, with an exceedingly bad grace, but a prodigious, and almost ludicrous affectation of liberality and good faith, is afforded in the Clayton and Bulwer treaty, in which Great Britain magnanimously binds herself to abstain from doing what is both physically and financially impossible, namely, to "colonize" Central America, "control" and "exercise dominion over it," provided the United States will assent to the same conditions,—that is to say, refrain from annexing that country or any portion of it, even though it should be desired by each, and be essential to the welfare of both! The clause in the treaty of peace with Mexico, providing that none of the Mexican States shall be admitted into the American Union, except with the consent of the Mexican Central Government, was a suggestion jointly made to the Mexican Commissioners by the British and French Legations, with what disinterested object the reader can easily divine, although he may

But it is not by a comparative view of the value of the proposed work to the various maritime nations of the world, that its importance to the United States is to be estimated. It is not the ambition of this country to prosper at the expense of others; but to open by its own energy and enterprise new sources of wealth, and gather new elements of greatness. We would not that England or France were less, but that we may be superior to both.

The Pacific Ocean, as its name implies, is a placid sea, and upon its quiet waters, as I have already said, that powerful element of modern civilization, which received its first and most important, practical application on the waters of our own Hudson, seems destined to achieve its greatest triumphs. This result is indicated by a variety of circumstances. The islands of that ocean have been scattered with a wise reference to the wants of trade, under the new era which steam navigation has wrought in the intercourse between nations; and, by a series of events, the ultimate tendencies of which could not have been anticipated by those who participated in them most actively, those islands have been placed under influences, and in relations, which favor most strongly the interests, and meet most fully the requirements of the United States. The peaceable absorption of the Sandwich Islands

not comprehend the folly of a Senate which ratified the clause. As an appropriate pendant to the Clayton and Bulwer Treaty, the United States should propose one parallel in terms, substituting "India" instead of "the States of Central America," and observe the result. It might prove significant of the nature of British magnanimity, and would certainly illustrate the sincerity of British devotion to the principles so grandly put forward in the treaty above referred to. "You may have the crow, and I will take the turkey; or I will take the turkey, and you may have the crow," was the liberal alternative presented by the white hunter to his Indian companion, in dividing the spoils of the chase. The Indian reflected a moment, and then inquired, "Why you no talk turkey to me?" Equal reflection, it is timidly suggested, might be judiciously exercised in signing treaties, or at least in ratifying them.

within our confederacy, is an event near at hand, and as inevitable as the decrees of Heaven. The elastic power of our system has been fully tested, its vitality proved; and its ability to mould and harmonize vast masses of men into one consistent, vigorous whole, is no longer a question open to doubt, or admitting of discussion. The annexation of the Sandwich Islands, however pregnant with future results, may therefore be effected without any shock to our political constitution or civil organization; like the purchase of Florida and Louisiana, the annexation of Texas, and the purchase of California, it is an event reserved for the fulness of time, and will occur in the order which has been assigned to it by that Almighty Power whose controlling hand is indelibly stamped upon every page of our history.[1]

[1] The policy both of the Sandwich Islands and the United States has hitherto been, that the former should remain neutral and independent. Having far greater interests in those Islands than all other nations of the world combined, the United States has nevertheless been content that they should be common ground for all nations, at the same time she has declared that she could not permit them to be occupied by any European power. But recent events, and particularly the conduct of France, have shown, that while in their present condition, these islands are subject to constant and most unjustifiable insult and disturbance from European powers, to the injury of American, not less than native rights and interests.

"In 1849, on the flimsiest of pretexts, the French dismantled the forts of the island, and destroyed much public and private property. The grounds of these piratical attacks were simply contemptible. The duty on French brandies, it was said, was too high; some mischievous boys had mimicked a French priest, and had not been punished; a French whaler had been fined sixty-five dollars for violating port regulations; Catholic priests were not so much favored as Protestant; and the Government had the audacity to use the English language in its official communications!

"In December last, (1850,) a French commissioner, M. Perrin, arrived at Honolulu, in the frigate Sérieuse, and once more insisted on the above demands, with the addition of some others still more absurd. Perceiving the inutility of concessions, and that the French would be satisfied with nothing short of the virtual sovereignty of the group, the king and chiefs decided upon non-compliance, and to await the action of the French forces.

Facilities of intercourse and communication amongst men are the ligatures which bind them together; and with a corresponding improvement in these, no expansion of terri-

That American readers may fully understand the importance of French interests in the Hawaiian kingdom, it is only necessary to say that at this time, with the exception of the Catholic Missionaries, forced upon the islanders at the point of the bayonet, there are not a dozen Frenchmen in the group, and of them not an individual of any position. The only French commerce is an indirect one of a trifling amount, from Valparaiso, and the visits of a dozen whale-ships annually.

"The French authorities on this visit were disappointed in the results. The native population, independent of their chiefs, exasperated by a series of injuries, pertinaciously persisted in, had determined to resist the landing of the French forces. The numerous American and English residents, to a man, sympathized fully with them; and without their assistance the Hawaiians would have found no difficulty in driving the French back to their boats. But this would have subjected the town of Honolulu to a bombardment, and entailed, upon Americans in particular, a heavy loss in property. Fortunately, the United States ship Vandalia was in port, and was prepared to resist any act involving injury to American citizens. The French authorities, desirous of avoiding a collision with the American naval force, at last consented to patch up a provisional treaty, referring to the home government for further instructions. The upshot of this is, however, merely to give them time to mature their plans, and prepare a force which shall, without fail, secure the submission of the king. Knowing this, he, his chiefs, and people, have intimated to the American Government, it is said, their desire to be admitted into the Federal Union, reserving for themselves nothing further than security in their civil rights.

"If this be correct—and there seems to be no reason to doubt it—the offer is now made to the citizens of this Republic, as a free gift, of the entire Sandwich group, on such terms as Congress may impose. The islanders ask, in return, simply to receive the rights and protection accorded to American citizens. If this government does not avail itself of the opportunity thus presented, they may never again have a similar offer. The group, in territorial extent, is unimportant, its area being but 6,500 square miles, but it is capable of supporting tenfold its present population (80,000). It is the commercial and military key to the North Pacific, the central point from which radiate all the channels of commerce of that vast sea; possessing fine harbors, a fertile soil, and salubrious cli-

tory is to be dreaded. What men have hitherto been accustomed to call "opposition," or "conflict of interests," has no real existence; on the contrary, the best interests of all

mate, nothing is required but a stable government to make it the Cuba of the Pacific. It already consumes annually nearly $1,000,000 of American merchandize. Its American permanent population is not far from 1,000, possessing valuable sugar and coffee plantations, in which, and in other permanent improvements, large sums have been expended. A merchant of Boston is the proprietor of a sugar plantation on the island of Kauai, the cost of which was nearly $90,000.

"The American Board of Missions have expended somewhere near $1,500,000 in their operations, and have settled on the group fifty or more families, possessing valuable homesteads. The floating American population touching at these islands annually, is not far from 15,000, seamen and voyagers, from some 400 vessels. In short, American enterprise, both commercial and philanthropic, have invested the group with its present political importance—bestowed upon the inhabitants laws, religion, civilization, and will soon add to those gifts language—for the English tongue is rapidly superseding the Hawaiian. The islanders have thus a moral claim upon the American nation for protection. In no way can this be more efficiently bestowed, than by receiving them into the family of this great Republic. It is true the native population is melting away by the same untoward causes which have wasted away our Indians, but in a slower degree. Those that remain are as well prepared to be American citizens as the multitude of European emigrants. Unlike the generality of them, they can read and write, and have already acquired democratic ideas, under the operation of their own liberal constitution of government, which will readily enable them to incorporate themselves under our institutions. One fact is certain—the native population is destined to be supplanted in numbers and power by a foreign race. They desire us to be their successors and protectors. Shall we, or shall we not be? It can now be done, with the consent and urgent desire of all interested. It requires no outlay of money—the present revenues of the islands are more than adequate to the expenses of its government; time, opportunity, the interests alike of the inhabitants and ourselves point to this result. If all the facts bearing upon this question be presented to the people of the United States, a favorable response to the desire of the Hawaiians must be the result."

men,[1] wherever and however situated, are in strict and entire harmony.

The Sandwich Islands are now but little further removed from the centre of the United States, than was New Orleans but twenty years ago; it is both easier and speedier to communicate, at this hour, with the capital of Nicaragua, than it was at that period with the capital of Ohio! Steamers, with the speed of twelve miles the hour, would go from New York, *via* the proposed canal:

To the Sandwich Islands in	20 days.
" Callao	18 "
" Valparaiso	20 "
" Canton	40 "
" Calcutta	46 "

But New York is not the United States. San Francisco is equally entitled to have this calculation made with reference to the distances from her magnificent bay to the points here named. Upon the same basis, the actual time requisite to go from San Francisco

To the Sandwich Islands would be . . .	9 days.
" Canton	30 "
" Calcutta	36 "

But the Sandwich Islands would probably be brought within a week's steaming of San Francisco; practically nearer than were the extremities of the State of New York, at the period of the Confederation![1]

It is known that coal, the grand essential to steam navigation, is found at various points upon both continents, and in

[1] The Steamer "Commodore Stockton," was to have sailed from San Francisco for Honolulu, on the 20th of June last,—the pioneer in the enterprise of opening steam communication across the Pacific, between the United States, and the nations of Asia.

the islands of the Pacific; but until these deposits are developed, our whaling fleets, passing from Atlantic ports, to the north-western seas, in the form of ballast alone, at rates merely nominal, are able to furnish a supply adequate to the wants of any line of steamers which may be established, to ply between San Francisco and the ports of China.

In treating of the proposed communication between the ocean, I have abstained from making any calculations respecting the augmentation of trade, which it is deemed would follow from it, for the simple reason that the past furnishes no standard whereon it can be estimated. The new elements which five years have introduced into our commercial relations, put all experience at fault; the dream of the speculator is found to be nearer the truth than the labored calculations of the man of statistics. In 1832, the exports of domestic cotton goods from the United States to the western coast of the continent, were less than six hundred bales; in 1847, they amounted to over twenty thousand bales; in 1848, to more than thirty thousand; and in 1850, to upwards of one hundred thousand! In 1832, we received from the same coast products, collectively, not exceeding $3,000,000 in value; in 1850, in gold alone, not less than $50,000,000! And this enormous sum, there is reason to believe, will this year be more than doubled.

There is, nevertheless, one branch of industry or trade, and that neither the most important nor the most profitable of those which engage the attention of our people, in respect to which we may make some approximate calculations, illustrating, from one point of view, alike the importance of our interests in the Pacific, and the advantage of a ship canal between the oceans.

The capital annually employed in the whale fishery of the United States, is upwards of $15,000,000; and in 1849, the number of vessels engaged in its prosecution was 613, carrying, in round numbers, 200,000 tons. For nine years the

average annual product of this fishery has been, 141,242 barrels of sperm; 235,456 barrels of whale oil; and 2,324,578 pounds of bone; in aggregate value amounting annually to $7,356,142. It is estimated that fully two thirds of the vessels, and three fourths of the tonnage of the whaling fleet, are engaged in the Pacific, and that three fourths of the product of the fishery comes from thence; that is to say, 400 vessels, carrying 150,000 tons, and producing $5,520,000. It has been calculated, by competent hands, that, allowing for wear and tear of ships, expenses of manning, victualling, and sailing, interest on capital invested, insurance, loss on products detained by length of voyage, leakage, etc. etc., that the gross profits do not more than equal one-fifth of the gross returns, i. e., $1,150,000. One third of the time occupied in each whaling voyage, it is calculated, is lost in going to and from the whaling seas, *via* Cape Horn. By the construction of the proposed canal, in the saving of time, wages, and other expenses, saving of insurance and interest, quicker returns, increased amount of actual fishing, it is estimated, by the same competent hands, that the gross returns would be quite $7,000,000, of which amount, not less than $3,300,000 would be gross profits! Assuming these calculations to be true, the actual augmentation of the wealth of the country, from this source alone, would equal two millions of dollars per annum.

The value of the proposed work, therefore, is not so much in the saving of time and money in the departments of trade already established, but in the new sources of wealth which it shall develop. Hitherto the tide of emigration has flowed into our country from the east; still Europe pours her thousand stalwart men per day into the single port of New York; the forests bow before the advancing column of labor; roads, canals, and railways mark its steps; wealth and strength are developed in its path. But the New World is no longer the land of hope and promise to the Celt and Teuton alone; from

the far off empires of the Orient, the once enigmatical Cathay, come the men of other races, to aid in the solution of the grand problem which Time and Heaven are working out within our borders.[1] Amongst the most industrious, inoffensive, and valuable of our citizens in California, is the Chinaman.[2] Inured to industry, educated in the strictest subordi-

[1] The following table shows the number of foreign emigrants who arrived at the port of New York for the week ending July 14th.

From Ireland	3,723	From Sweden	1
Germany	2,280	Denmark	5
England and Wales	1,294	Italy	2
Scotland	597	West Indies	5
France	127	Nova Scotia	1
Spain	2	South America	9
Switzerland	106	Canada	2
Norway	521	Poland	4
Total for one week			8,679

This, it should be understood, is not an exceptional week, but one taken at random, and not above the average. On the 29th of July, (a single day,) 5,811 emigrants arrived; and during the entire month, 33,854. It is probable that the emigration to this single port, for 1851, will reach nearly or quite four hundred thousand.

For the two weeks ending August 14, the arrivals amounted to 28,000; on the 15th alone, they were 2,338; and for the month of September, 38,726.

[2] "Within a week past, nearly five hundred Chinese emigrants have arrived upon our shores, all in two ships, hale and hearty. They remain but a day or two in our city, and are then off to the mines—first buying a pickaxe, shovel, and a few necessary mining tools, and not a few of them drop their own native 'rig,' and equip themselves in a pair of thick heavy cowhide boots, in lieu of their wooden shoes. Besides, many of them dress up in the real Yankee style—all of which is good for trade! One feature in regard to this class of foreigners is, that even the *celestials* are rapidly acquiring our own language. This was convincing evidence to my mind that they had been sent here for good."—*Letter to the Journal of Commerce, dated San Francisco, May* 15.

nation to the laws, thrifty in his habits, he is well adapted to the peculiar condition of that wide region, where labor is now the grand, I had almost said, the sole requisite to wealth and greatness. What the German and the Irishman have accomplished for the eastern slope of our mighty country, the Chinaman seems destined to achieve for its western. He is more patient and persevering than either, and is perhaps best adapted to occupy that position which in Europe is assigned to what is called "the laboring population," but which here carries with it nothing of odium, but, on the contrary, is a claim to respect. China is over-crowded; her land is stocked to its utmost capacity; and millions of her people pass their entire lives on floats built on the waters; she numbers 400,000,000 of people—a population greater than that of Europe. The system under which this vast number of men have lived and flourished for thousands of years must necessarily have many sound and stable elements, which, engrafted upon those recognized under our own system, or developed by the circumstances of our past condition, can only result in good. The great necessity of popular education is nowhere in the world so completely recognized as in China. Common schools existed there, while all that Europe had of learning was confined to the pedants of the monasteries. Education was there made the standard of civil preferment, of dignity, and power, before the Goth and the Vandal swept down from the forests of the north upon the plains of Italy,—before European civilization had its birth. Religious intolerance has no place in the Chinese character; obedience, strict obedience to the laws, is the first lesson in his education, and the principal article in his political creed. Industry is inculcated as a duty; to be idle is alone discreditable. From such a source as this, the Pacific United States seem destined to draw a large part of their future population; with what precise result no man can tell, but undoubtedly one favorable, as I have before said, to the solution of the

great civil, social, and moral problems involved in the future history of this continent.[1]

It may not, at first glance appear, even admitting the likelihood of large emigration from Asia, how that circumstance is likely to affect the proposed canal. But whatever shall tend to develop the resources of the Pacific States, or bring us in more intimate relations with China, must necessarily augment the use, and consequently the prospective value of this work; which, in its turn, must contribute towards encouraging that very emigration from which it is to derive a means of support and profit. Our own country is full of examples, where works of public utility, projected and built in regions almost uninhabited, have, within a few years, derived a profitable support from the farms, the manufactories, the towns, and the cities which they themselves called into existence. By this species of reciprocal action is wealth created; not in an arithmetical but a geometrical ratio; and thus will the construction of this great work operate upon the interests of the United States.

[1] Humboldt, after considering the proposed canal under its commercial aspect, hints at its probable political consequences. He observes, that the state of modern civilization is such "that the trade of the world can undergo no great changes that are not felt in the organization of society;" and inclines to the belief that as soon as this canal is built, "Eastern Asia, at present insulated and secure from attack, will inevitably enter into more intimate connection with the nations of the European race. It may be said," he adds, "that the neck of land against which the equinoctial current breaks, has been the bulwark of the independence of China and Japan. In penetrating further into futurity, imagination dwells upon the conflict between powerful nations, eager to obtain exclusive advantages from the way opened to the commerce of the two worlds."—(*Personal Narrative*, vol. vi., p. 297.) The acquisition and settlement of California, however, have entirely changed the political aspect of the question of the canal. California has made the United States principal to that work; and there is no extremity to which she will not go, in preserving the transit *free* to her commerce and her citizens.

There is one other consideration which should not be overlooked in this connection. It is the possibility of the opening of a ship canal, or other effective means of communication, between the Mediterranean and Red Seas, whereby the benefits resulting from a canal across our own Continent would be anticipated, and in great part, monopolized by other and rival nations. That such an undertaking is not impossible, is sufficiently well established by the fact that, a canal was actually built by the Ptolemies and the Arabian Caliphs. The remains of that stupendous work were discovered, and its course distinctly traced by the French Engineers who accompanied the Egyptian Expedition. It may be conceded that the savage violence of Eastern nations, and the deadly jealousies of European powers, will effectually prevent the reöpening of this line of communication between Europe and Eastern and Southern Asia.[1] We may safely, for the present, rely upon the retarding operations of European systems, to prevent the undertaking of a work, by which so

[1] "The principal obstacles to the realization of this project," said the late distinguished Henry Wheaton, in a despatch to the Department of State, "are not natural but political obstacles. France and Great Britain have been constant rivals for influence and power in Egypt, ever since the invasion of that country by Bonaparte; and especially since the rupture of the Treaty of Amiens, in 1803, which turned upon the *ultimatum* of the British Cabinet demanding the possession of Malta, as a bulwark against the renewal of that attempt by the French, and as a consequent security to the British dominions in the East Indias. We have seen this rivalship threatening to disturb the harmony of the two powers, during the negotiations relating to the affairs of the East, in 1840. In the meantime the British had silently taken possession of Aden, at the mouth of the Red Sea. And the occupation of Algiers by France was, and still is contested, silently, if not openly, by Great Britain, upon the ground that, if the French gain permanent footing in North Africa, it may ultimately lead the way to the reconquest of Egypt. These mutual jealousies have been manifested in the divergent lines pursued by the French and English diplomatic agents, respecting the passage to the Indies, by way of the Red Sea."

much might be gained; yet we should not lose sight of the fact that, the French Engineers who planned the proposed canal across the Isthmus of Suez, have satisfactorily shown that it would save one third in distance, and nearly as much in time, in navigating from her ports to the Coromandel coast of India—thus increasing still more, as compared with Europe, the physical disadvantage under which the United States labors, in respect to the Oriental trade. Nor should the significant fact that, Gibraltar, the key to the Mediterranean, and Aden, commanding the Red Sea, are both in the hands of our greatest and most unscrupulous rival. The manner in which Great Britain seized upon Aden, has its almost exact parallel in the seizure of San Juan. Situated at the mouth of the Red Sea, it controls the entrance, and, as a consequence, the commerce which may pass through it, as effectually as San Juan, situated at the mouth of the river of the same name, controls that stream, and the passage through the lakes and the grand basin of Nicaragua. It is one of the three important points indicated by the great Portuguese Conquerer Albuquerque, as essential to command and monopolize the commerce of the East.[1] The object of the seizure

[1] These three points, as designated by Albuquerque's son, in his account of his father's life, were, Malacca, the centre of Asiatic commerce at that period; Ormus, at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, and Aden, in the straits of Babelmandel. "Had the King of Portugal secured a strong position, by taking possession of Aden, as he had done of Ormus and Malacca, he might, by means of this dominion over the three seas, consider himself lord of the world, as did Alexander when he reached the Ganges; since, with these three keys, the passages are shut to all other nations."—*Commentaries of the Great Alfonso d' Albuquerque*, vol. iv., p. 217.

This great conquerer would have turned the course of the Nile into the Red Sea, and made the fertile delta of Egypt a desert, in order to realize this gigantic project of commercial monopoly, and prevent the Venetians from trading with the East Indies, through Egypt. See his remarkable address to his troops, at the attack on Malacca, *Commentaries*, vol. iii., p. 133.

of Aden, was also identical with that which led to the seizure of San Juan—the two atrocities reflect light, one upon the other, and should caution us against permitting any interference, on the part of Great Britain, or any other power, upon any pretext, however plausible, in the project of the Nicaraguan canal.[1] That interference will not be directed to the construction of the work, but to its obstruction; not to the promotion of general commercial interests, but to the prevention of American supremacy in the Pacific.

[1] "But whatever doubts," observes Mr. Wheaton, in a despatch to the Department of State, distinguished for its research and comprehension of American interests, in connection with this subject, "But whatever doubts may exist as to the relative advantages of shortening the passage to the East Indies from west to east, to the different nations interested in the commerce of Asia, there can be none as to the advantages which would be derived to the United States from shortening the passage from east to west. In this question is involved, not only the direct, but the indirect intercourse with the East Indies. * * * * * * * * * * The opening a water communication from one sea to the other, thus becomes a matter of vital importance to us. Our national interests, commercial, political, and social, are all involved in the question. The necessity of competing with other rival nations, for the new trade now opened with the 'Celestial Empire,' from which the veil of mystery has been rudely withdrawn, and which has been compelled to abandon its anti-social principles of non-intercourse with foreigners; of extending our established commerce with the western coasts of the two American continents, and the Polynesian archipelago; of giving increased facilities to the whale fishery, and of establishing a more convenient communication, by sea, with our territories beyond the rocky mountains, and our naval stations in the Pacific ocean—all these circumstances combine to augment the importance and urgency of this great question. A new and vastly increased interest has been given to the subject, by the measures adopted by our government, for establishing diplomatic intercourse with China, and the independent isles of the Pacific, and by the extended schemes of colonization recently developed by Great Britain and France in Australasia, New Zealand, the Marquesas, and Tahiti."

ABORIGINES OF NICARAGUA.

ABORIGINES OF NICARAGUA.

CHAPTER I.

ABORIGINAL NATIONS OF NICARAGUA; THEIR GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION; LANGUAGES, AND MONUMENTS.

THE present condition of the Indians of Nicaragua may be very easily inferred from what I have had occasion to say of them in the preceding pages. They have now very completely assimilated with their conquerers, to a great extent intermarried with them, adopted their religion and language, and have taken an entirely new position, both in respect to themselves and the world at large, from that which they occupied at the time of the discovery of America, in the fifteenth century. But it cannot prove uninteresting to the general reader to know something of their former condition, before the infusion of European elements amongst them, when they were governed by laws and institutions originating with themselves, and by religious systems of indigenous growth. And here we are compelled to rely upon the accounts of the early Spanish adventurers, often vague, and sometimes contradictory; upon the few monumental records which time and religious zeal have spared, and upon the fragmentary traditions, and imperfect vocabularies, which are still preserved amongst them. The fullest and most reliable chronicle is that of Gonzalez Fernandez de Oviedo y Valdez, historiographer of the Indies to the King

of Spain, who visited Nicaragua in 1526, within four years after its discovery by Gil Gonzalez de Avila. Some portions of his account were used by Herrara, in the compilation of his History of Spanish America, who seems also to have had access to some other sources of information, with which we are unacquainted. Oviedo's chronicle was, nevertheless, never published in the original; nor does its existence appear to have been known until 1839, when it was discovered by that indefatigable scholar, TERNEAU COMPANS, who procured a copy of the MS. from Spain, and translated and published it in his invaluable series of Original Voyages and Relations concerning America.[1]

Besides the accounts of Oviedo, and the detached, compiled chapters of Herrara, we have some references to the aborigines of Nicaragua in Torquemada's "Monarquia Indiana," in the History of D. Carlos de Alva Ixtlixochitl, and in the later work of Gage, published in 1680. Don Andreas Cerezeda, who accompanied Gil Gonzalez de Avila, as King's Treasurer, when he penetrated into Nicaragua in 1522, communicated the outlines of the expedition, with some account of the country and its inhabitants, to Peter Martyr, which were incorporated by him in the third and fourth chapters of the sixth of his celebrated Decades.

The monuments of the country have never been described until now, nor does their existence seem to have been known to the world previously to my own explorations there. Neither does it appear that, beyond a few words of the language of the Niquirans, vocabularies of any of the languages had, up to that time, been procured. The latter deficiency has been very poorly supplied by the imperfect

[1] The copy in the original Spanish, which he possessed, is now in the library of Mr. Peter Force, of Washington, whose enlightened zeal, in collecting such materials as may serve to illustrate the history of the United States and of America, is only equalled by the broad liberality with which he permits their use by all to whom they may be valuable.

ones which it was my good fortune to obtain; but beyond these fragments, nothing remains to us of the languages of Nicaragua.

GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION.

My personal observations upon the aborigines of Nicaragua were almost wholly confined to the region around the great lakes of the interior; a region unerringly marked out by the circumstances of geographical position and physical conformation, as the theatre of vaster enterprises than human daring has hitherto conceived, or human energy yet attempted. Here nature has lavished her richest gifts, and assumed her most magnificent forms—high volcanoes, gentle slopes, level plains, and broad and beautiful lakes and rivers are here combined with a fertility of soil and a salubriousness of climate probably unsurpassed by any equal extent of country under the tropics. These were conditions eminently favorable for bringing together primitive communities of men, and for nurturing and sustaining a vast population. That it did so, we have the testimony of all the early chroniclers; and he who has passed over its broad plains and luxuriant slopes, and observed its attractions and resources, will be prepared to credit the assertion of the pious Las Casas, that it was "one of the best peopled countries in all America."

"The great fertility of the soil," says this early author, "the goodness of its air, and the vast number of its inhabitants, cannot be sufficiently expressed. There were cities there four leagues in length. The great quantities of excellent fruits that grow there, drew together these multitudes of people. Their cities were situated in vast plains, and the people, having no mountains near in which to hide themselves, besides, the climate being so sweet, and the country so agreeable, that the inhabitants could not easily resolve to quit it, they were consequently more exposed than those of

other countries, to the persecution and outrages of the Spaniards."[1]

From the testimony of the early explorers, from the monuments, and other existing sources of information, we know that the Indians of Nicaragua were then, as now, divided into two widely separated, if not radically distinct families, corresponding very nearly with the natural divisions of the country.

Upon the low alluvions, and amongst the dense, dank forests of the Atlantic coast, there existed a few, scanty, wandering tribes, maintaining a precarious subsistence by hunting and fishing, with little or no agriculture, destitute of civil organizations, with a debased religion, and generally corresponding with the Caribs of the islands, to whom they sustained close affinities. Of these rude tribes it is not my present purpose to speak. A portion of their descendants, still further debased by the introduction of negro blood, may still be found in the wretched Moscos or Mosquitos, who, by a brazen fraud, are attempted to be passed off upon the world as a sovereign nation, comprehending the duties, and capable of fulfilling the requirements of government! The few and scattered Melchoras, on the river San Juan, are certainly of Carib stock, and it is more than probable that the same is true of the Woolwas, Ramas, Toacas, and Poyas, and also of the other tribes on the Atlantic coast, further to the southward,

[1] *An Account of the first Voyages and Discoveries made by the Spaniards in America.* By Don Bartholomew de las Casas, Bishop of Chiapas, (edition 1699,) p. 28.

"There is not in all the Indies," says Oviedo, "a country more fertile, and better cultivated than this. The climate is healthy and agreeable, the waters excellent, game and fish abundant. They harvest maize and fruits in vast quantities, and among the fruits is a kind of prunes from which they make delicious wine. They have trees which distil liquid amber, and cacao from which is made an excellent beverage. There are many deer, and *dantas* (tapirs), wild boars, and great numbers of birds."

towards Chiriqui Lagoon, and collectively denominated Bravos.

In the more elevated and salubrious regions around the great lakes of the interior, and upon the slopes of the Pacific, on the other hand, the natives had many features in common with the semi-civilized nations of Mexico, Guatemala, and Yucatan, and had made many advances in the same direction with them. Like these, they were divided into numerous tribes, or small sovereignties, with separate and independent chiefs or councils of government. With the single exception of those inhabiting the narrow strip of land between Lake Nicaragua and the Pacific, and who had also spread to the principal islands of the Lake, they appear to have been essentially one people, with like habits and customs, a common religion, and speaking, if not the same language, probably dialects of the same language.

The exception to which I here refer, is one of the most remarkable facts in the history of the American aborigines. The inhabitants of this narrow isthmus, between the lake and ocean, were Mexicans, speaking the ancient Mexican language, and having a civil and social organization, as also a system of religion, identical with those which prevailed amongst the Aztecs and their affiliated nations. The evidence upon this point, furnished by my own investigations in the country, is conclusive, and will shortly appear. It is only necessary here to say that this fact is sustained by the positive testimony of the historian Oviedo, who was in the country in the years immediately succeeding the conquest, and who speaks from his own personal knowledge. His language is as follows: "The *Niquirans*," i. e. the inhabitants of the district between the lake and ocean, "who speak the Mexican language, have the same manners and appearance as the people of New Spain."

The remaining inhabitants of Nicaragua, this authority divides into two stocks, viz: those speaking the Chorotegan

language and its dialects, and the Chontals or Condals. The first of these, or the *Chorotegans*, occupied the entire country north of the Niquirans, extending along the Pacific Ocean, between it and Lake Managua, to the borders, and probably for a distance along the shores of the Gulf of Fonseca. They also occupied the country south of the Niquirans, and around the Gulf of Nicoya, then called Orotina. These were again separated into several divisions, all speaking the Chorotegan language, or dialects of it:

I. THE DIRIANS, or "people of the hills," who occupied the territory lying between the upper extremity of Lake Nicaragua, the river Tipitapa, and the southern half of Lake Managua and the Pacific, whose principal towns were situated where now stand the cities of Granada, then (called Salteba,) Masaya, and Managua, and the villages of Tipitapa, Diriomo, and Diriamba. According to Oviedo they were true Chorotegans.

II. THE NAGRANDANS, or people of Nagrando, those speaking the Nagrandan dialect. They occupied what is now called the Plain of Leon, or the district between the northern extremity of Lake Managua and the Pacific. The name is preserved in that of the City of Leon, which is still sometimes called Leon de Nagrando.

III. THE CHOLUTECANS, speaking the Cholutecan dialect, situated to the northward of the Nagrandans, and extending along the Gulf of Fonseca, into what is now the territory of Honduras. A town and river in the territory here indicated, still bear the name of Choluteca, which however is a Mexican name.

IV. THE OROTINANS, occupying the country around the Gulf of Nicoya, and to the southward of Lake Nicaragua.

Concerning the Indians of the Chorotegan stock, Oviedo observes, that they were the enemies of the Niquirans, and that "their languages, manners, customs and ceremonies were so different," as to be utterly incomprehensible to the

other. He nevertheless adds, that their religion was the same; and here it may be observed that all the religions of the semi-civilized nations of the central parts of the continent approximated to a common type.

The *Chondals* or *Chontals*, the third great division mentioned by Oviedo, occupied the wide, mountainous region, still bearing the name of Chontales, situated to the northward of Lake Nicaragua, and midway between the nations already named and the savage hordes bordering the Caribbean Sea, to whom, it is possible, they may have in some degree assimilated. "These Indians," says Oviedo, "have no connection with the Chorotegans and Niquirans, and speak a language as different from theirs as the Basque is from the German." He nevertheless leaves the inference that their religion was very much the same. Herrara adds, that they were "a mountainous people and clownish;" and I am informed by the Abbe Brasseur de Bourbourg, that the name itself, in one of the Maya dialects, signifies "strangers," or people from abroad.

The chroniclers seem to agree in representing the Chorotegans as the original occupants and predominating family in the country, the *autochthones*. "Those speaking the Chorotegan language," says Oviedo, "are the aborigines of the country, and its ancient masters." Herrara asserts that among them, those speaking the Cholutecan language were "the original and most ancient, held the estates, and had the cacoanuts, which were the money and wealth of the country." It is difficult to understand what is meant by this observation, unless it is that there existed among the people a class arrogating, like the Incas, a superiority over the others, and speaking a "court language," or one in some respects differing from theirs.

It seems therefore that, at the time of the discovery, there existed in Nicaragua two grand families of Indians, whose

probable relations and subdivisions are exhibited in the following table:

I—SEMI-CIVILIZED.		II—SAVAGE.	
Chorotegans;	*Dirians, Nagrandans, Orotinans.*	Caribs.	Embracing the Waiknas, or Moscos, Melchoras, Woolwas, Toacas, Poyas, and the other detached tribes situated on the Caribbean Sea, and to the east and southward of the Gulf of Nicoya.
Cholutecans;	*A Mexican Colony.*		
Niquirans;	*A Mexican Colony.*		
Chondals;	Approximating to the Savage tribes.		

Oviedo informs us that there were five totally distinct languages spoken in Nicaragua, and Gomera enumerates them as follows, viz: the Niquiran or Mexican, the Chorotegan, Orotinan, Chondal, and Caribisi, or Carib. The general, geographical distribution of these languages will be inferred from what has already been said of the distribution of the various aboriginal stocks in Nicaragua. The Chondal, according to Hervas, extended as far as Oaxaca. This could not have been the fact, unless it was identical with, or closely related to, the Maya, Quiche, Poconchi, and Huasteca; which hardly harmonizes with the concurrent testimony of the chroniclers, that the Chondals were an exceedingly rude people, speaking a rude language.

LANGUAGES.

Previous to my visit to Nicaragua, no vocabularies of any of these languages were in existence. From the Indians of Subtiaba, near Leon, in the north-western part of the country, I procured a vocabulary of about two hundred words; and another vocabulary of about the same number of words, from the Indians of Masaya, a hundred miles to the southward of Leon, and in the territory immediately adjoining that which we know was occupied by the Niquirans, or the Mexican Colony. These two languages have no verbal resem-

blances, whatever similarity may have existed in their grammatical features; and as Oviedo, in one or two places says expressly that, the Indians around the Lake of Masaya spoke the Chorotegan language, we are driven to the conclusion that that which was spoken near Leon was the Orotinan. This was undoubtedly spoken by the Indians south of the Niquirans, around the Gulf of Orotina, where the volcano of Oroti, or Orosi, still perpetuates their name.

But until we have vocabularies, from the known seats of the Orotinans, I shall not venture to call the language which was spoken on the Plain of Leon by that name. Meantime, I prefer to call it, from the aboriginal name of that district, *Nagrandan.* The language of which I procured a vocabulary at Masaya, following the authority of Oviedo, I have called Chorotegan, or Dirian. Oviedo gives but one word of this language, viz: *nambi*, dog, which is the precise word still retained. Some of the names of places and natural objects within the area in which this language was spoken, seem to have a relationship to certain Peruvian names. Thus Momobacho, Momotombo, and others, sound wonderfully like Moyobamba, Tambobamba, Guamabacho, etc. It would be interesting to take up the suggestion, and inquire whether there is really any relationship between the languages of Peru and Central America; but this I have not now the means of doing.

From the Indians yet residing on the Island of Ometepec, I procured, with great difficulty, a few words, and some of their numerals. This island was occupied by the Niquirans, and the words which I recovered coincide precisely with the Mexican. Indeed the very name of this island, distinguished for two high volcanic peaks, is pure Mexican, *Ome*, two, and *tepec*, mountain.

The region of Chontales was visited by my friend Mr. Julius Frœbel, in the summer of this year (1851). He penetrated to the head waters of the Rio Mico, Escondido, or Bluefields,

where he found the Indians to be agriculturists, partially civilized, and generally speaking the Spanish language. They are called Caribs by their Spanish neighbors, but have themselves a vague tradition that they came originally from the shores of Lake Managua. Mr. Frœbel procured a brief vocabulary of their original language, which, however, seems to have little affinity to any of the languages spoken elsewhere in the country, on the coast, or in the interior. I have given it the name of Chondal, from the fact that it exists in the district of Chontales, and to distinguish it from the others. It may be questioned whether it is the true Chondal (or what the early writers called by that name), or even a dialect of it.

The following brief table comprises words from the various languages ascertained to have existed in Nicaragua. A few words of Mexican have been introduced to facilitate comparison with the Niquiran, which, however, is really Mexican, differing from the latter in no essential respect, except that the terminals *tl* or *tli* are contracted or wholly omitted.

COMPARATIVE TABLE.

English.	Nagrandan.	Chorotegan, or Dirian.	Niquiran.	Mexican.	Waikna, or Moscan.	Chondal?
God	———	gopaseme	teot	teotl	———	———
Man	rahpa	nuho	tlacat	tlacatl	waikna	all
Woman	rapaku	naseyomo	ciuat	ciuatl	mairen	yall
Head	a'cu	goochemo	tzonteco	totzontecon	lel	tunni
Foot	naku	graho	hixt	icxitl	mena	calni
Dog	romao	nambi	izcuindi	itzcuintli	yul	sulo
Deer	———	numbongame	mazat	mazatl	sula	———
Rabbit	———	———	toste	tochtli	kaia	———
Fire	ahku	nahu	tlet	tletl	panta	cuh
Water	eeia	nimbu	at	atl	lia	wass?
House	guah	nahugu	calli	calli	watla	u
Maize	ehpe	nahma	centl	centli	aya	———
Rain	unde	coprinumbi	quiavit	quiauitl	li	———
Flower	———	nele	xochit	xochtli	———	———
Wind	neena	neshtu	hecat	ehecatl	pasa	uing
Snake	apu	nule	coat	coatl	piuta	———
Eagle	———	moonkoyo	oate	quauitl	———	———
Flint	eese	nugo	topecat	tecpatl	walpa	———
Mountain	———	diria	tepec	tepec	———	asang
One	imba	teka	ce	ce	kumi	alastaj
Two	apu	nah	ome	ome	wal	muyebu
Three	asu	ho	ye	yei	niupa	muyebas
Four	acu	hahome	nau	naui	wal wal	muyerunca
Five	hiusu	———	macuil	maquilli	matasip	muyesinca?

Of what I have called *Chorotegan*, or *Dirian*, I was only able to procure the vocabulary, which is presented on a subsequent page; but of the *Nagrandan*, after much trouble, and through the assistance of my friend, Col. FRANCISCO DIAZ ZAPATA, I obtained some of the grammatical rules and forms of construction, and to this language the following remarks are applicable.

Neither the article nor the preposition is expressed. The man speaks, *rahpa-data*. The rage of the dog, *gahu-romoa*. Dog with rage, *romoa-gahu*. Beauty of the woman, *musa-rapaku*. Woman with beauty, *rapaku-musa*.

The plural is formed by adding *nu* to the singular, thus: *ruscu*, bird; *ruscunu*, birds; *eshe*, tree; *eshenu*, trees.

The degrees of comparison seem to have been indicated by prefixes, of which, however, there are but two, equivalent, in their signification, to more and most, and to better and best. They are *mah*, better or more, *pooru* or *puru*, best or most. For example:

Meheña *good.*
mah-meheña *better-good, or more good.*
puru-meheña *best good, or most good.*

Deficiency or diminution, was expressed by *ai* or *mai*, thus: *ai-meheña* or *mai-meheña*, bad, or lacking-good.

Of a man fair of complexion, or what they understand to be of better complexion than another, i. e., a better man, *mah-rahpa*. To run is *dagalnu* or *nagagnu*, and runner is *dagalni;* fast runner, *mah-dagalni;* very fast runner, *puru-dagalni*. *Ahmba*, old; *mah-ahmba* or *ahmba-nu*, older, or more old; *puru-ahmba*, very old. In the Mexican, this is effected by reduplication, as *hue*, old, *hue-hue*, old-old, or very old. The word *ąmba* or *'mba*, sometimes has the value of great, and as such it appears in the numerals; thus *diño*, ten, *diñoamba*, great ten, or old ten, i. e., the first power of ten, or one hun-

dred. *Tahi* is small; *chichi*, very small. In the combinations of these, and also of *ahmba* or *amba*, as in the Mexican, the final syllable only is used. Thus *egni*, fish; *egnimba*, big fish; *egnihi*, little fish; *egnichi*, very little fish.

The pronouns are as follows:—

I,	*icu.*	Those,	*caguinu.*
We, (m)	*hechelu.*	This, (m)	*cala.*
We, (f)	*hecheri.*	This, (f)	*hala.*
Thou,	*ica.*	These, (m)	*cadchinulu.*
Ye, (m)	*hechela.*	These, (f)	*cadchici.*
Ye, (f)	*hechelai.*	Mine, (m)	*cugani.*
He,	*icau.*	Mine, (f)	*icagani.*
She,	*icagui.*	Yours, (m)	*cutani.*
They, (m)	*icanu.*	Yours, (f)	*icatani.*
They, (f)	*icagunu.*	His,	*cagani.*
That,	*cagui.*		

I could not procure a complete paradigm of any verb. Col. Zapata furnished me with the following, embracing some of the inflexions of the verbs, *sa*, to be, and *aiha*, to come. I am a little skeptical about the accuracy of the future tenses of *sa*.

SA——TO BE.

Present.

SINGULAR.		PLURAL.	
I am,	sá.	We are,	so.
Thou art,	sá.	Ye are,	soa.
He is,	sá.	They are,	sula.

Imperfect.

I was,	caná.	We were,	cananá.
Thou wast	caná.	Ye were,	cananoá.
He was,	caná.	They were,	lacananá.

Preterite Definite.

SINGULAR.		PLURAL.	
I was,	sá cá.	We were,	sá cuá.
Thou wast,	sachu.	Ye wère,	sá cuahi.
He was,	sa cá.	They were,	sa gahu.

Pluperfect.

I had been,	mucasini.	
Thou hadst been,	mucanasini.	[*Plural the same.*]
He had been,	mucanasadini.	

Future Absolute.

I shall be,	lamanambi.	We shall be,	lamananna.
Thou wilt be,	same.	Ye will be,	lamananna.
He will be,	same.	They will be,	lamana.

Future Anterior.

I shall have been,	malamana.	We shall have been,	lamana.
Thou wilt have been,	lama.	Ye will have been,	lamala.
He will have been,	lama.	They will have been,	lamalahi.

AIHA, TIHA, OR AHIHA——TO COME.

Present.

I come,	icunaha.	We come,	hechelunagubia.
Thou comest,	icanaha.	Ye come,	hechelaguhala.
He comes,	icannaha.	They come,	icagunuguha.

Imperfect.

I did come,	icunahalu.	We did come,	hechelunagubalú.
Thou didst come,	icanahacha.	Ye did come,	hechelanaguabala.
He did come,	icaunahalu.	They did come,	icagunaguhalu.

Perfect.

I came,	icusanaha.	We came,	hechelusagualalu.
Thou camest,	icasanacaha.	Ye came,	hechelasagualala.
He came,	icausahalu.	They came,	icaguinasagunhulu.

Pluperfect.

I had come,	icuschisalu.	We had come,	hechelunigualalu.
Thou hadst come,	icaschisahala.	Ye had come,	hechelaniguilala.
He had come,	icausahalu.	They had come,	icaguinusehisagunhula.

Future Absolute.

I shall come,	icugaha.	We shall come,	hecheluguha.
Thou wilt come,	icaguhacha.	Ye will come,	hechulagualala.
He will come,	icaugaha.	They will come,	icaugnugunhualu.

Future Anterior.

I shall have come,	icuvihiluniha.	We shall have come,	hechehivihiluingualalu.
Thou wilt have come,	icavihilunechala.	Ye will have come,	hechulavihilunigula.
He will have come,	icauguivihiluniahalu.	They will have come,	icauinushenigunhualu.

Imperative.

Come thou,	ahiyaica.	Let us come,	ahiyohecheu.
Let him come,	gahahagui.	Let them come,	gunhuaganeñu.

Conditional Present.

I should come,	icugahalu.	We should come,	hechelugualalu.
Thou wouldst come,	icagahachala.	Ye would come,	hechalamagualama.
He would come,	icaugahalu.	They would come,	icauguinumagnuhuama.

Second Conditional Past.

If I had come,	icumahaluvihilu.	If we had come,	hechelumainueamaguiha.
If thou hadst come,	icamaimacha.	If ye had come,	hechelamagunhunuma.
If he had come,	icauguimaimaha.	If they had come,	icauguinasohimisaguhua.

I am not prepared to say that the above inflexions are altogether correct; I nevertheless give them as they were communicated to me. I can only add to the above, from my own knowledge,

Daiya,	to see ;
Sadaiyama,	to have seen ;
Daiyanga,	seeing.
Dahta,	to speak ;
Dahtanga,	speaking.

I have said that the Indians of the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua, the Moscos and others, were probably of Carib stock. This opinion is founded, not only upon the express statements of Herrara, who says that "the Carib language was much spoken in Nicaragua," but also upon their general appearance, habits, and modes of life. Their language does not appear to have any direct relationship with that of the Southern Caribs; but is probably the same, or a dialect of the same with that spoken around what is now called Chiriqui Lagoon, near the Isthmus of Panama, and which was originally called Chiribiri, or Chraibici, from which comes Gomera's Caribici or Carib.[1]

The subjoined table comprises a list of about two hundred words in the Nagrangan and Dirian, or Chorotegan dialects or languages. I have also added a list of Moscan, or Mosquitian words, derived from the copious vocabulary laboriously collected by my friend Mr. A. J. Cotheal, in the

[1] Thirteen leagues from the Gulf of Nicoya, (towards the east, doubtless,) Oviedo speaks of a village called Carabizi, where the same language was spoken as at Chiriqui. The country on the Pacific, in the same latitude with Chiriqui, was called Cabiores ; and next to it was a province called Durucaca; of both of which the inhabitants were barbarous and degraded—whence the Spaniards, in token of their contempt for the Jews, called this section of country, Judea.

Second Volume of the Transactions of the American Ethnological Society.

	English.	Nagrandan.	Chorotegan, or Dirian.	Moscan.
1	God	. . . . .	gopahemedeo	. . . . .
2	Devil	koonete	nimbumbi	wulasha
3	Man	rahpa	nuho	waikna
4	Woman	rapaku	nahseyomo	mairen
5	Boy	saika	nasome	tukta
6	Girl	saiku	naheyum	kiki
7	Child	chichi	naneyame	lupia
8	Father	ana	gooha	aize
9	Mother	autu	goomo	yapte
10	Husband	a'mbin	'mbohue	maia
11	Wife	a'guyu	nume	maia-mairen
12	Son	sacule	nasomeyamo	lupia-waikna
13	Daughter	saicula	nasayme	lupia-mairen
14	Brother	geneu	mambo	moniká
15	Sister	. . . . .	borunyama	laikra
16	Head	a'cu or edi	goochemo	lel
17	Hair	tu'su	nembe	tanwa
18	Face	enu	grote	mawan
19	Forehead	guitu	goola	prurera
20	Ear	nau	nuhme	kaima
21	Eye	setu	nahte	nakro
22	Nose	ta'co	mungoo	kamka
23	Mouth	dahnu	nunsu	bila
24	Tongue	duhu	greuhe	twaisa
25	Tooth	se'mu	nehe	napa
26	Beard	dambalu	gesagua	unmia
27	Neck	abulu	. . . . .	nana
28	Arm	pa'pu	deno	klakla
29	Hand	prechi	. . . . .	mita
30	Fingers	danau	. . . . .	sinaia
31	Nails	senanu	monsa	armala
32	Body	go'po	booproma	upla
33	Belly	schambo	goose	biarra
34	Leg	suntu	geeko	woyata
35	Foot	naku	graho	mena
36	Toes	danac'ua	. . . . .	mena-senaia

	English.	Nagrandan.	Chorotegan, or Dirian,	Moscan.
37	Bone	. . . . .	necone	dusa
38	Heart	buneo	nambooma	kupi
39	Blood	aite	nenuh	tala
40	Chief	namede	. . . . .	wati
41	Friend	. . . . .	. . . . .	uple
42	House or hut	gua	nahngu	watla
43	Kettle	daren	. . . . .	dikwa
44	Arrow	. . . . .	nitore	trisba
45	Bow	. . . . .	. . . . .	pinata
46	Axe	tlahua	nemoaguya	asa?
47	Knife	guichulu	. . . . .	skiro
48	Canoe	daguao	. . . . .	dore
49	Bread	upa	. . . . .	tane
50	Tobacco	randé	nemurema	twaka?
51	Sky	dehmalu	nekupe	kasbrica
52	Moon	. . . . .	. . . . .	kati
53	Sun	ahca	numbu	lapta
54	Star	ucu	nuete	slilma
55	Day	be or belu	. . . . .	iwa
56	Night	medoun	copripiomu	. . . . .
57	Season	ucumes	. . . . .	nani
58	Year	sigu?	. . . . .	. . . . .
59	Wind	nena	neshtu	pasa
60	Lightning	nagayatu	. . . . .	yunmila
61	Thunder	nadua	. . . . .	alwane
62	Rain	unde	coprinumbi	li
63	Fire	ahku	nahu	panta
64	Water	ecia	nimbu	lia
65	Earth	gooba	nekoopu	tasba
66	Sea	daneia	nimbuyumbu	kabo
67	River	ecia	. . . . .	awala
68	Creek	ea-chi	. . . . .	tingmi
69	Island	timbah	. . . . .	daukwara
70	Stone	esee or esenu	nugo	walpa
	Maize	eshe	nahma	aya
	Wood	barra	nanguima	dus
	Leaf	enā	nema	waia
	Bark	. . . . .	nanzogua	taia
75	Grass	rana	. . . . .	twi
	Flesh	nai	nampoome	wina

	English.	Nagrandan.	Chorotegan, or Dirian.	Moscan.
	Deer	. . . . .	numbongame	sula
	Squirrel	biseaha	. . . . .	buteong
	Dog	romoa	nambi	yul
80	Rabbit	. . . . .	. . . . .	kaiaki
	Snake	apu	nule	piuta
	Egg	ragha	nuguloge	marbra
	Turkey	chimpepe	. . . . .	kusu
	Fish	egni	pocuguet	inska
90	White	mesha	andirume	pine
	Black	medagina	nansome	siksa
	Red	manga	arimbome	paune
	Green	masha	. . . . .	sane
	Small	chichi	nasunge	silpe
100	Great	oompa	nema	tara
	Old	ahmba	nuhyumbe	almuk
	Young	datie	nosominyumu	wama
	Good	mehena	. . . . .	yamne
	Bad	aimehena	. . . . .	saura
105	Dead	ganganu	gagame	pruan
	I	icu	saho	yung
	Thou	ica	sumusheta	ruan
	He	ica	. . . . .	wetin
	We	hechelu	semehmu	yung-nani
110	Ye	hechela	"	man-nani
	They	icanu	. . . . .	wetin-nani
	This	cala	. . . . .	naha
	That	cagui	. . . . .	baha
	All	duwawa	semehmu	puk
115	Many	. . . . .	pocope	nia
	Much	. . . . .	. . . . .	nia
	Who	. . . . .	. . . . .	dia
	Near	inge	. . . . .	lama
	To-day	endola	yazra	na-iua
120	Yesterday	deshe	. . . . .	iua-wala
	To-morrow	gase	paseanyaro	yunka
	Yes	mena	. . . . .	au?
	No	unta	aco	ahia
	Buttock	gashtug	. . . . .	
125	Bird	pusku	. . . . .	
	A Fly	ñug	. . . . .	

	English.	Nagrandan.	Chorotegan, or Dirian.	Mosgan.
	Above	purumicita		
	Silver	prahca.		
	Plantain	numbaba		
130	Word	enita		
	Basket	dashtu		
	Hot	tehsmica		
	Warm	mica		
	Breeches	frela		
135	Hat	gadusi		
	Ox	auha		
	Fever	ganguiga.		
	Road	gamba		
	To Eat	asu?	. . . . .	paiai
140	To Drink	mahuia	boprima	daaia
	To Run	dagalnu	botupu	plap-aia
	To Leap	masiga	boora	soutw-aia
	To Come	aiho	aroya?	bal-aia
	To Go	aiyu or icu	paya	waia
145	To Sing	nagamo	pacoondamu	aiwnuaia
	To Sleep	ami	payacope	yap-aia
	To Speak	dahta	mage?	ais-aia
	To See	daiya	oome	kaik-aia
	To Kill	maharega	koypame	ik-aia?
150	To Love	naujawala	. . . . .	
	To Ask	danda	. . . . .	
	To Take	aaya	. . . . .	
	To keep silent	pruisha	. . . . .	
	To Know	daninu	. . . . .	
155	To Die	neageña	. . . . .	
	Temple	. . . . .	nangumba	. . . . .
	Mountain	. . . . .	diria	. . . . .
	Cave	. . . . .	nu'pe	. . . . .
	Smoke	. . . . .	nemare	. . . . .
165	Flower	. . . . .	nele	. . . . .
	Reed	. . . . .	nure	. . . . .
	Eagle	. . . . .	moonkoyo	. . . . .
	Lake	. . . . .	neenda	. . . . .
	Afternoon	. . . . .	tasipio	. . . . .

The word for *man* in the Moscan language, is *Waikna;* and *Waikna* is the name which the Moscan Indians, before their debasement by intermixture with the negroes, arrogated to themselves. It was a very common practice amongst the aborigines of America, to distinguish their tribe by a word, meaning "the Men," *par excellence.* This is the significance of the name *Apache*, borne by the roving Indians of northern Mexico. With the Athapascas, *dennce*, the Algonquins and others, *inne*, with the Muyscans, *muysca*, and with the Araucanians, *reche*, all signified *the men*, or pure men, and entered into the designations of the various tribes.

Subjoined is the vocabulary, procured by Mr. Frœbel, in Chontales, and referred to on page 314. As there observed, it does not seem to have any affinity with the other Nicaraguan languages, except a faint relationship, in the inflexions of the verb, with the Nagrandan.

CHONDAL?

Sun	māa	Nose	nágnitak
Day	māada	Mouth	dinibas
Star	māabka	Blood	anasscá
Moon	uáigo	House	ù
Fire	cuh	Town	uálna
Water,	wass	Plantain	uagi
Earth	sāno	Sugar	disnok
Night	baraca	Cow	sana
Air, Wind	uing	Milk	sanadagoscá
Mountain	asang	Horse	pomca
Man	all	Tiger	nágua
Woman	yall	Dog	sulo
Father	papāni?	Cat	nisto
Mother	mamani?	Fish	tabomm
Son	paunima	1	alosláj
Daughter	paucoma	2	muyebu
Little boy	tiguis	3	muyebas
Little girl	batanil	4	muyarunca
Brother	uajaini	5	muyesinca?

Sister	amini	6	dijca, or muydijca
Head	tunni	7	bajca, or muybajca
Arm	uacálni	8	muyacca
Foot	cálni	9	yaccabavo
Eye	miniktaka	10	muyhasluy

To sleep	amacuting
To eat	tecuting
I am	acaralaúyang
Thou art	ayalalaúga
He is	alaslaúga
We are	yaralalauca
Ye are	laucayalálauca
They are	eauyoadá

So far as can be ascertained, the Indians of Nicaragua practiced a system of numeration corresponding with that common to nearly all the civilized, and some of the barbarous, nations of the continent. That is to say, they used what Mr. Gallatin has denominated the *vigintesimal system*, instead of the decimal—i. e. counted by twenties instead of tens. Among the Esquimaux, the Algonquins, the Choctaws, and some other nations and families, it seems that the primitive method of counting was by fives. This is what may be called *finger-counting;* and that their system of numbers originated in counting first the fingers of one hand, then of both, and finally both fingers and toes, is established by the names of the numerals themselves. The word expressing the number 5, in the Carib of Essequibo, the Moscan, and some other languages, means *one hand;* that expressing 10, *two hands*, or both hands; that expressing 20, *a man*, i. e. both hands and feet. In the Esquimaux, 8, 9, and 10 respectively mean the middle, the fourth, and the little finger.[1] The Peruvians and

[1] Crantz says of the Esquimaux, "Their proper numeral table is *five*, then counting on their fingers thy call *six* by the name of the first finger, and for the following, repeat two, three, four, five; and count from ten to twenty with their toes. Sometimes, instead of twenty they say '*a man*;' for one hundred '*five men*.'"

Araucanians had a purely decimal system. Humboldt has shown that the vigintesimal system existed in the Basque—that enigmatical language, which seems to hold more and closer affinities to some of those of America, than any known to have existed in Europe.

I was able to procure the numerals complete of only the Nagrandan dialect or language. They are given below. It will be observed that there is a simple, uncompounded word for *ten*, and another for *twenty*.

1 Imba	1
2 Apu	2
3 Asu	3
4 Acu	4
5 Huisu	5
6 Mahu	6
7 Niquinu	7
8 Nuha	8
9 Melnu	9
10 Guha	10
11 Guanimba	10+1
12 Guanapu	10+2
13 Guanasu	10+3
14 Guanacu	10+4
15 Guanisu	10+5
16 Guanmahu	10+6
17 Guanquinu	10+7
18 Guanuha	10+8
19 Guanmelnu	10+9
20 Dixo, imbadiño, or 'badiño	1×20
21 'Badiñoimbanu	1×20+1
22 'Badiñoapunu	1×20+2
23 'Badiñoasunu	1×20+3
30 'Badiñoguhanu	1×20+10
31 'Badiñoguanimbanu	1×20+10+1
32 'Badiñoguanapunu	1×20+10+2
33 'Badiñoguanasunu	1×20+10+3

40 Apudiño	2×20
41 Apudiñoimbanu	2×20+1
42 Apudiñoapunu	2×20+2
43 Apudiñoasunu	2×20+3
50 Apudiñoguhanu	2×20+10+1
51 Apudiñoguanimbanu	2×20+10+2
52 Apudiñoguanapunu	2×20+10+3
60 Asudiño	3×20
70 Asudiñoguhanu	3×20+10
80 Acudiño	4×20
90 Acudiñoguhanu	4×20+10
100 Huisudiño or guhamba	5×20 or great ten
200 Guahadiño	10×20
400 Diñoamba	Great twenty
1000 Guhaisudiño	10×5×20
2000 Hisudiñoamba	Five great twenties
4000 Guhadiñoamba	Ten great twenties

The terminal *amba* or *mba* in the Nagrandan language signified great or increase; one hundred, therefore, is sometimes called *guhamba* or great ten; *diñoamba* or great twenty is four hundred; and ten great twenties is four thousand. In common, I believe, with the Maya only, the Nagrandan words for 40, 60, 80, 100, etc., mean respectively twice twenty, three, four and five times twenty. In common also with the Maya, the numerals from 20 to 39 are compounded of 20 and the numerals from one to nineteen, with the addition of the terminal *nu*, which is the sign of the plural. But in the Maya this terminates with 40, while in the Nagrandan it is continued throughout, from 40 to 60, 60 to 80, etc.

Col. Galindo has given us the names of six tribes of Indians in Costa Rica, of none of which have we any vocabularies. Neither have we any of the languages spoken in San Salvador, and in Honduras. There is reason to believe, however, that the Chondal extended into the latter state, as also the

language spoken on the coast. It is also probable that, the language which I have called the Nagrandan, prevailed amongst the aborigines occupying the salubrious, central plateau of Honduras. This I infer from the names of Chinandega, Posultega, Chichigalpa, Comogalpa, on the plain of Leon, and Matagalpa, Tegucigalpa, etc., which are clearly from one source, on the plateau of Honduras.

In Guatemala there existed a variety of languages or dialects, stated at eighteen and at twenty-four, of which the Poconchi, the Quiche, Quichekiel or Kachiquiel, Sinca, Chorti, Mam, and Subtugil were the principal. The vocabularies of none of these, so far as we are enabled to institute comparisons, sustain any relation to those of Nicaragua.

That the Niquirans were Mexicans, requires no further or better proof than is afforded by the fragments of their language already presented. The fact, as we have seen, was distinctly asserted by the early voyagers; but as they did not present any evidence in support of their statement, it never received full credit among students. Indeed, as late as 1850, Dr. Latham, in his erudite work on "The Varieties of Man," regards the evidence on this point as "by no means conclusive." In completing the evidence, and establishing incontestibly that such a colony did exist in Nicaragua, at the period of the discovery in the fifteenth century, I have the satisfaction of fixing one more and a very important point of departure in American Ethnological inquiries; important, as showing that this continent has not been exempt from those migrations, corresponding to the currents and tides of the ocean, which have, earlier or later, swept over every part of the Old World, and affected so remarkably, by intermixture and change of soil and climate, the condition and relations of its inhabitants.

We have then presented to us the extraordinary phenomenon of a fragment of a great aboriginal nation, widely separated from the parent stock, and intruded among other

and hostile nations; yet, from the comparative lateness of the separation, or some other cause, still retaining its original, distinguishing features, so as to be easily recognized. The causes which led to their migration from Mexico, can probably never be accurately known. They have a tradition that they came from the north-west; and that they left their original seats in consequence of having been overpowered by a hostile nation, superior to themselves in numbers, who, not satisfied with conquering them in battle, made slaves of them, sacrificed their women and children, and outraged them in various ways. They called the country from whence they came Ticomega Emaguatega, which name corresponds with none with which we are acquainted. This tradition receives a strong support from Torquemada, who states it as a historical fact, current in Mexico itself, that, at a very early period, two considerable Mexican nations dwelling in Soconusco, on the coast of Oaxaca, near Tehuantepec, were attacked by the Ulmeques, who had been their enemies before their settlement in that region—leaving the inference that there had been an anterior migration of the same nations, probably from the valley of Anahuac. The Ulmeques subdued them, imposed on them the most grievous burthens, and sacrificed numbers of them to their gods. Reduced to despair, they consulted their priests, who directed them to depart from the country—which they did, going southward. These, he adds, after various adventures, arrived in Nicaragua, where they were well received by the people, who made room for them on the shores of the lake. They afterwards extended their limits by war and alliances.[1]

Fragments, Torquemada adds, dropped off from the main

[1] In another part of his History, Torquemada gives an account of a pretended conquest of Nicaragua by Montezuma, in which, however, is mixed up the same circumstances elsewhere related as connected with the migration; showing, as observed by M. Terneaux Compans, that it is only the old tradition, applied to modern times.

body in Guatemala, where they built Mictlan (City of the Dead), and Yzcuitlan (City of the Rabbit), and where there still exist numerous places bearing names of Mexican origin. Amongst the migrating tribes he mentions the Cholultecas, as separating from the rest, and settling on the Gulf of Nicoya. He probably means to say the Gulf of Fonseca, where, as we have seen, the name is still perpetuated. This opinion is supported by his subsequent declaration, that one portion of the people, amongst whom the Mexicans intruded themselves, fled to Nicoya, thus accounting for the division of the Chorotegans already referred to. Torquemada also states that the Mexicans founded a city on Lake Managua, which they called Xolotlan, or in Chorotegan language Nagrando. But if so, it seems most likely that they afterwards abandoned the position. Had they held it at the time of the Conquest, the fact would not have escaped Oviedo.

It has been supposed that the Pipil Indians, occupying the coast of San Salvador, were also of Mexican origin, and arrived in Central America at the same time with the colony in Nicaragua. We have no vocabulary of their language, but the names of most of the places in the region which they occupied, or occupy, are clearly Mexican. Istepec, Usulatan, Sesuntepec, Cuscutlan, Suchiltepec, Cojutepec, Cuyutitan, Jilpango, etc., are unmistakably Mexican. It has, however, been suspected that the friendly Indians from Mexico, who accompanied Alvarado in his conquest of the country, were established here, and that the names to which I have referred were given by them. This is a point which is yet open to investigation; meantime, I incline to the belief that a Mexican colony also existed in San Salvador.

The Mexican historian, Ixtlixochitl, records that at the period of the destruction of the Toltecan Empire, in the year Cetecpatl, or 959 of our era, a part of those who survived went to the southward, to Nicaragua. But the traditions of the people themselves indicate that the recital of Torquemada is

nearest the truth. It seems, therefore, that this colony, like that of the Mormons in the Valley of the Salt Lake, and that of the Jews in Palestine, was founded by a general migration, undertaken in consequence of persecutions, through the midst of intervening nations—an armed migration, giving war to the weak and the hostile, and negotiating with the friendly. It is curious and important to know of an authentic instance where migrations of this kind have take taken place on this continent, in estimating the possible, as well as the probable, relationship which may exist between its various families.

That similar separations and migrations have occurred in the night of American history seems undoubted; but at periods so remote, that the offshoots have lost their original features, or have retained them in a modified and obscured form, painful to the investigator, because suggestive of relations which it is impossible clearly to establish. We have a remarkable example in the Natchez, a small tribe on the Mississippi river, whose institutions civil and religious, manners, habits, and customs, approximated closely to the Peruvians; more closely, in fact, than to any other nation of the continent. Enigmatical fragments like these, scattered over both the Northern and Southern Hemispheres, betoken a high antiquity for the American race.

The causes which led to these separations, and the motives which impelled the American nations to divisions and migrations, must probably remain forever unknown, except so far as they may be inferred from the recorded history of the old world. For, after all, man, of whatever race or however situated, is subject to the same laws, and guided by the same influences. The state of separation, *disruption*, as it is sometimes called, in which the American race was found, has been variously attributed to a radical, physiological defect in its character, to extraordinary natural phenomena, convulsions of nature, such as are said to have swallowed up the island of Atlantis,—calamities filling men with a terror so

monstrous, that, handed down from race to race, it darkened their intellects, and hardened their hearts, and drove them, flying from each other, far from the blessings of social life. To me, however, this separation and sub-division of the aboriginal race, and the exclusion of its different families, in respect to each other, seem rather due to long periods of time, and long continued migrations of single nations and tribes, from one portion of the continent to the other.

The discoverers, when they landed on the shores of our own country, found one great current of migration setting from the North-west, upon the region now occupied by the New England and Middle States. Another flowing from the direction of Texas and New Mexico into the Southern States east of the Mississippi; and the slow but constant southward tendency of the Oregon tribes, has been a frequent subject of remark among observers. I do not now refer to those traces of vast populations, antedating all traditions, which abound in the Mississippi Valley, mute but most truthful and impressive witnesses of ancient migrations—not of single tribes and petty nations, but of vast families of men.

The causes of these migrations, as I have said, must probably remain conjectural. It is the popular belief, that most have been from the north towards the south; and the plausible explanation, that more genial climates and fertile soils were the impelling causes to them, has been generally accepted. Yet, like many other popular beliefs, it is eminently unfounded. The great tides of men have flowed very nearly upon the same parallels of latitude. The descent of the Germans on Rome was no migration, as compared with these; it was the eddy, the outward flow of the great current, which afterwards swept over the ocean barrier, traversed a new world, and is now gathering its strength on the golden shores of the Pacific.

RELICS OF ART.

Our knowledge of the antiquities of Central America, extends only to those found in the northern portion of that interesting, but as yet little known country; and is confined to the monuments at Copan, in Honduras, and Quirigua and Quiché or Quesaltenango, in Guatemala. The researches of Messrs. Stephens and Catherwood, in conjunction with a few incidental notices from Galindo and others, have made these familiar to the world, and excited the deepest interest as to the results of future investigations. The extent of population and the degree of civilization which they indicate, have naturally led to the conclusion that many others exist in the same regions, the discovery of which will reward the adventurous explorer, and throw new light upon the primitive civilization of the New World.

But in prosecuting researches here, there are many difficulties to be encountered, which can be but imperfectly estimated by those not on the spot. The population of Central America is small, and almost entirely confined to certain narrow localities upon the Pacific slope; and the political circumstances of the people, as well as the state of education among them, have been such as to afford little encouragement to archæological studies. As a consequence, they know far less than the people of the United States, of the aboriginal monuments of their own vicinity. Little information of importance to the investigator can be gathered from them. Besides, by far the greater proportion of the country is in its primitive state, and covered with dense, tangled, and almost impenetrable tropical forests, rendering fruitless all attempts at systematic investigation. There are vast tracts, untrodden by human feet, or traversed only by Indians, who have a superstitious reverence for the moss-covered and crumbling monuments that are hidden in the depths of the wilderness, and which their vague traditions tell them are remnants of

the greatness of their fathers, the shrines and statues of their ancient gods, which it is a religious duty to hide from the profane intrusion of an alien race. These Indians are often unfriendly; and it is only at the risk of life that advances can be made into their fastnesses. From them but little can be gathered; and if any discoveries are made, it must be by accident. The hunter or the herdsman may encounter ancient remains in the wilderness; and if they are remarkable, or he is curious, he may mark the spot and be able to point it out to the traveller. But the information he may be able to give is always of an uncertain character, and leaves the inquirer, if not in actual doubt as to the existence of anything worthy of his attention, at least under the apprehension that, even after a long and fatiguing journey, and after enduring every kind of hardship, he may be unable to discover the object of his search. For these and other reasons, it will be long before the treasures of the past, which exist in Central America, can become fully known. Their investigation must be the gradual work of time, in which individuals can but partially assist.

Most of the monuments which fell under my observation have been described in the preceding narrative. I have no doubt, however, that many will be discovered, as the country becomes better known. Indeed, I heard of a number of localities where remains are to be found, but which my occupations would not allow me to visit. Amongst the most remarkable of these are the traces of immense works in the district of Chontales, near the Indian town of Juygalpa, on the northern shore of Lake Nicaragua, nearly opposite the city of Granada. They were observed by Dr. Livingston in his visit to the gold mines of that region; and are described by him as consisting of trenches three or four yards broad at the bottom, and extending indefinitely, in a right line, across the savannas, and into the depths of the forest. He followed one for upwards of a mile. At intervals the trenches widen,

forming elliptical, sunken areas, sixty or eighty feet in diameter. In one of these areas, and on a line transversely to that of the trench, were two small mounds of stone, in the next area four mounds, and so on, alternately. These mounds were five or six feet in height, and placed with the utmost regularity. The purposes of these singular remains, as well as their extent, until further and complete investigation, must remain matters of conjecture. It may nevertheless be observed, that there are traditions of a ruined city, with a variety of singular monuments, near Juygalpa, of which it may be worth the trouble of the adventurous explorer to determine the truth. It is very certain that the late Chevalier Frederickthal obtained some monuments from the northern shore of the lake,—but their fate is unknown.

In my visit to the volcano of Las Pilas, in what was anciently the populous province of Marabios, about twenty miles north-east of Leon, and near the base of the volcano of Orota, I was shown a number of low mounds of earth and stone, rectangular, and set round the edges with stones, which seemed to have been the sites, or foundations of ancient buildings. They were covered and surrounded by fragments of broken pottery. It is possible that they indicated burial places; but I had no means of excavating them, to determine the fact.

In Honduras, as also in San Salvador, I heard of remains and monuments, equal to those of Copan in extent and interest, which I had no opportunity of visiting, but which I hope to be able to investigate in person, at no very remote period.

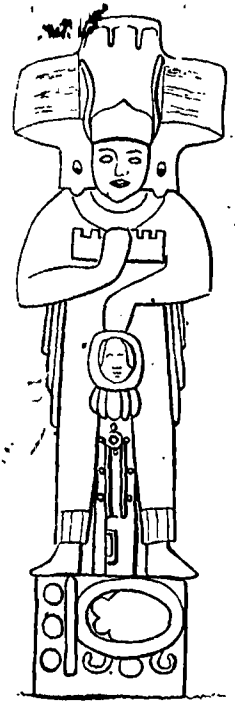
In respect to the monuments which I have described, and their probable origin, little need be said. They may differ somewhat amongst themselves in antiquity, for it is not to be supposed that they were all made at the same period. But there is no good reason for supposing, that they were not made by the nations found in possession of the country. It

will, in fact, be seen in another connection, that they had idols of stone in their temples, which were carved of different forms, to represent the various divinities worshipped by their makers. These temples were structures of wood, surrounded by altars, or high-places of earth and stone; upon which, as in Mexico, sacrifices were performed. Many of these temples were burned by the conquerors, the high-places destroyed, and the idols broken in pieces. And I have had frequent occasion to remark, that by far the greater proportion of the monuments yet remaining, bear indubitable marks of the conquerors' religious zeal, in their battered faces and broken limbs.

It may seem somewhat incongruous that while Nicaragua was inhabited by people of different families—the autochthones and the intruders from Mexico—that their monuments should have sustained so close a resemblance. But while the fact, they that differed wholly in language, and greatly in manners and customs, is affirmed by the early chroniclers; the additional fact that they were alike, or closely assimilated, in religion, is also as distinctly affirmed.

The monuments found in the island of Zapatero, which there is every reason to believe was occupied by the Niquirans, differ only in size, and their more elaborate workmanship, from those found at Momotombita, Subtiaba, and other places. Monoliths appear to have been common to all the semi-civilized nations of North America. They were found even at Palenque, where Mr. Stephens discovered one, of which a drawing is here introduced, for the purpose of illustrating a remark which has already been made, respecting the occurrence of the *cross*, in some of the aboriginal monuments. A number at Zapatero are distinguished by this feature; which, it is possible, was intended to represent some kind of head-dress. Archæologists are aware that the early monkish writers, laid great stress upon the fact that crosses were discovered in various parts of America, at the time of the Con-

quest. They deduced therefrom some very extraordinary conclusions. Don Carlos de Siguenza y Gongora speaks of one



drawn from the cave of Mizteca Baxa, and venerated, in his day, in the conventual church of Tonala, dedicated to St. Dominic. This cross he avers was "discovered by the music of angels being heard in the said cave, on every vigil of the glorious apostle St. Thomas," who, according to his hypothesis, introduced Christianity into America, immediately after the era of Christ. Gomara mentions cases in Yucatan; and Boturini testifies to having frequently met with them in the paintings. His error, however, consists in mistaking the symbolical "*Tonacaquahuitl*," or Tree of Life, for a cross. This is not the place to attempt an explanation of the ideas connected with this symbol. It was represented with branches something in the form of a cross, surmounted by a bird. This form was retained in some of the monuments, as well as in the paintings, as may be seen on the principal tablet discovered by Mr. Stephens, at Palenque, on the back wall of altar, Casa No. 2. (p. 345).

Several examples of vases, terra cottas, and other fictile products have been presented in the foregoing pages. In respect of execution, the ancient pottery of Nicaragua quite equals the best specimens found in Mexico or Peru. It is always well-burned, and often elaborately painted in brilliant and durable colors. The forms are generally very regular, but there is no evidence of the use of the potter's wheel: on the contrary, there is reason to believe that the ancient processes have undergone little or no modification since the

Conquest. The pottery generally in use amongst all classes in Central America, is of Indian manufacture, and is fashioned entirely by hand.

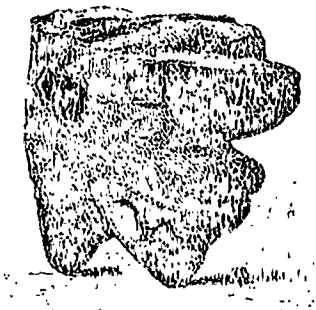
TERRA COTTA FROM OMETEPEC. ONE-FOURTH SIZE.

Several terra cottas and small vessels of pottery are figured in the accompanying plate. Figures 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 are from Costa Rica, where they were found in the ancient graves. Figure 1 is very symmetrical; each leg is hollow, and has in it a little ball, which rattles whenever the vase is moved. Figure 2 is not perfect; it originally supported some object upon its right shoulder. The head is represented covered with what resembles a close-fitting Highland cap. Figure 3 is a plain vessel, symmetrical in shape, but without ornament. Figure 4 is most artistical. The top is artfully fashioned in the shape of a tortoise. Figure 5 seems to have been designed only as a rattle. Figure 6 was obtained from the island of Ometepec, and represents an alligator upon the back of a human figure. It originally surmounted a large vase. The arms have been broken off, but their places are shown in the sketch.

ABORIGINAL RELICS.

LITH. OF SARONY & MAJOR, N.YORK.

Figs. 7 and 8 are drawings of stone hatchets or adzes. The first is composed of a variety of green quartz, and is alike symmetrical in shape, and elaborate in workmanship. It is highly polished upon the surface represented in the drawing; but the reverse has marks which show that it has been sawn from a block of the same material. Where the notches occur in the sides, is a hole drilled entirely through the stone, parallel to its face. The lower or cutting edge is slightly curved; implying that, if used for cutting purposes, it was as an adze. Altogether it exhibits far more skill in its workmanship than any similar relic which has fallen under my notice. It was found in an ancient grave, in Costa Rica, where others of similar material, but larger size and ruder form, are of frequent occurrence. Fig. 8 is of syenite, and in shape indistinguishable from the stone axes of the Indians, which are so abundant throughout Mexico and the United States, and which have their exact counterparts amongst the ancient relics discovered in the British Islands, and in the north of Europe. It was dug up near Granada in Nicaragua, during my stay in that city. Similar relics are numerous in that country, varying in size from three and four inches to a foot in length. Examples of relics of this kind might be greatly multiplied; but what have already been presented will be amply sufficient to give an accurate idea of their general characters, if not of their specific purposes.



LEG OF VASE FROM ZAPATERO. ONE-FOURTH SIZE.

CHAPTER II.

CIVIL, POLITICAL, AND SOCIAL ORGANIZATION; MANNERS, CUSTOMS, AND RELIGION.

THE Indians of Nicaragua were divided into numerous distinct tribes and petty sovereignties, governed by independent chiefs or caziques. These, it is presumed, were hereditary; but whether the descent was by the female side, as in many other parts of America, or by the male, we are not informed. This condition of things must have resulted in collisions between the several caziques, and, by war, intrigue, and alliances, in the aggrandisement of one at the expense of the other. Such was the fact; and by these means, some of the chiefs became very powerful, and had as tributaries and vassals, chiefs who were themselves proprietors of villages and districts of land. These were the personal attendants and body-guards of the greater chiefs, "their captains and courtiers."

We are, however, told that some of the districts and their inhabitants, were not governed by caziques, but by councils of old men called *Guegues*,[1] in whom were vested the supreme administrative and executive powers. They were elective; and in them was vested the appointment of a military leader, or "war-chief," as he was called amongst the northern nations, who, by virtue of his office, was a member of the

[1] This I take to be a Mexican word, formed by the reduplication of *huc* or *gue* old, huehue, or guegue, literally old-old, i. e., very old. *Huehue-tlalapan*, the Very-old-tlalapan, and Gueguetenango, Very-old-tenango, are names of places both in Mexico and Guatemala.

council. He was, nevertheless, jealously watched, and if suspected of plotting against the safety of the commonwealth, or for the purpose of securing supreme power in his own hands, was rigorously put to death by the council of Guegues. These councils were early abolished by the Spaniards, "who found it easier to control one man than a number," each one of whom had equal influence amongst the people. The Guegues were also the chroniclers of their respective tribes, and made books, in which they recorded their boundaries, and the limits of property, "with all the rivers, lakes, and forests, to which reference was made in case of dispute amongst their own people, or with the other tribes."

The custom of *tatooing*, it seems, was practiced to a certain extent, at least so far as to designate, by peculiarities in the marks, the several tribes or caziques to which the people belonged. "For," says Oviedo, "both sexes pierce their ears and make drawings on their bodies with stone knives, which are made black and permanent, by a kind of coal called *tile*."

The local administrations differed very much, according to the temper of the cazique. There nevertheless were many well-established rules by which he was governed, that were seldom or never violated. The nature of some of these will be discovered as we proceed. The subordinate officers of the caziques were distinguished by certain insignia, which never failed to receive the respect with which similar evidences of authority are regarded in civilized countries.

It appears that the chiefs, although absolute in their powers, nevertheless took care to call around them the best informed and most respected portion of their subjects, as advisers. Thus, whenever a military expedition or other enterprise was meditated, the chief, who was called *teite*, convened a *Monexica* or council, which appointed persons to assess the cost, so that it should fall equally upon the community. The councillors of the cazique were named for four

months, at the end of which time they went back amongst the people. They were always chosen from the old men. One of the first duties of the council was the appointment of subordinate executive officers, to act during the four months for which they were chosen, two of which were always present at the markets, to preserve the peace, and punish those who used false measures, or practised frauds of any kind, as also those who disobeyed orders, or violated received usages. It was also their duty to pay particular attention to strangers, and encourage them to frequent the markets or fairs.

The council houses were called *grepons*, surrounded by broad corridors called *galpons*, beneath which the arms were kept, protected by a guard of young men. The decision of the *Monexica* or council might be against the cazique, and his judgment be overruled; but he could dissolve it, nor could it be again convened except by his orders. The war-chief was elected by the warriors to lead them, on account of his ability and bravery in battle, and had undivided command of the forces; but the civil, or hereditary chief, often accompanied the army, and in case the war-chief was slain, either took his place in person or named a successor on the spot. The spoil of battle was not divided equally amongst the warriors; but each one kept all he got. It was not usual to punish cowardice with death; but cowards were despoiled of their arms and driven out of the ranks in disgrace. Prisoners were much desired for sacrifices, and consequently the warriors sought rather to capture than slay their enemies. Those who acquitted themselves well in battle, or who had triumphed in a hand-to-hand conflict with an enemy, took the title of *Tapalipui*, and as a mark of distinction were permitted to shave the entire head, leaving only a scalp-lock, or tuft, on the crown. This was required to be precisely half a finger in length, with a tuft in the centre, a little longer. The same practice also prevailed in Mexico.

Marriage amongst the Nicaraguan nations was a civil rite, performed by the cazique, and the ceremonies were much the same as those practiced amongst the Mexicans. The matches were arranged by the parents of the parties; and as soon as the bargain was concluded, two fowls and a *rula* (a kind of house-dog) were killed, some cacao prepared, and the friends and neighbors invited to the feast. This finished, the cazique led the couple into a small house, devoted to that purpose, in which a fire of resin was kindled, where, after giving them a lecture, he left them to themselves. When the fire was burned out, the rite was complete. If it proved that the woman was not a virgin, she was sent back to her parents, and permanently disgraced, while the man was at liberty to marry again. The couple, after marriage, received from their parents, a piece of land, and certain fruit trees, which, if they died childless, reverted to their respective families. But one wife was permitted to any man except the cazique, although concubinage was practised by those who could afford it. Bigamy was punished by exile, and by confiscation of property for the benefit of the first wife or husband, who was then at liberty to marry again. This privilege was not however extended to women having children. Adultery on the part of the wife, subjected her to severe flogging, and to be sent back to her family; but she still retained her effects. It liberated the husband from his marital obligations; the woman, however, could not marry again. Relationship, beyond the first degree, was no bar to marriage. Marriages within families, on the contrary, were encouraged as "tightening the bonds of relationship." Incest was unknown; but the man who debauched the daughter of his master or cazique, was buried alive, with the partner of his guilt. The man who committed rape was seized, confined, and unless he could make reparation, by large presents, to the injured woman or her parents, became her or their slave. Sodomites were stoned to death. Prostitutes were tolerated,

and the price of their favors limited at ten *amands* of cacao. They were accompanied by bullies (*rufianos*), who, however, did not share their gains. Establishments, or houses of prostitution, were kept publicly. On the occasion of a certain annual festival, it was permitted that all the women, of whatever condition, might abandon themselves to the arms of whoever they pleased. Rigid fidelity, however, was exacted, at all other times.

Parents might traffic with the persons of their daughters, without subjecting themselves to punishment. Prostitution was sometimes resorted to by girls, whose parents were unable to provide for them a proper marriage portion. When one of these, having by this means, secured a competence, desired to withdraw from that mode of life, she procured a piece of ground whereon to build a house, and collecting her lovers, announced to them, that those desirous of having her for a wife, must unite and build a house, after the plan which she should furnish, and that when completed, she would select her husband from amongst them. The house being built and stocked, a feast was prepared, at the close of which the girl took the man of her choice by the arm and led him away, exulting to be preferred over his rivals. The rejected ones, says the chronicler, "generally take it patiently, but occasionally one suspends himself from a tree, in order that the devil may have his part in the wedding, and is eaten for his pains."

Oviedo states that the men built the houses, cultivated the ground, hunted, and fished, while the women did the trading. If true, this was an exception to the common practice of the Indian nations, which devolved all the drudgery upon the females. "The husband," he says, before leaving the house, "must sweep it, and kindle a fire"—duties which now, most certainly, fall upon the females.

In respect to their physique, they were well made, and of fairer complexion than the average; and then, as now, fre-

quently shaved the head, leaving only a circle of hair extending along the edge of the forehead, from ear to ear. They all had a custom of cleaving the under part of the tongue, and of piercing their ears for the introduction of ornaments.

Like the Peruvians, the Natchez, and many other aboriginal nations, they flattened their heads. "When our children are young," said the chiefs to the Friar Bobadilla, "their heads are tender, and are then moulded into the shape which you see in us, by means of two pieces of wood, hollowed in the middle. Our gods instructed our ancestors that, by so doing, we should have a noble air, and the head be better fitted to bear burthens."

Murder under aggravated circumstances, was punished with death; but in all cases of homicide the perpetrator gave to the next relatives of the victim a male or female slave, clothes and other articles. Robbers had their hair cut off, and were the slaves of the injured party until complete restitution was effected.

A father might sell his own children or himself as slaves, in cases of great necessity, with the privilege of redemption. Payment of debts was rigidly required; if a man had borrowed maize or fruits, the creditor might repay himself from his debtor's fields.

Any man might expatriate himself, but he could not diminish the public wealth by taking any of his property with him; he might, however, give it to his relatives.

Their dwellings seem to have been rude structures of canes, thatched with grass, identical with those now used by the poorer inhabitants. The residences of the chiefs were of the same construction, but larger and more commodious. In all of the towns were one or more public squares, or market-places, around which the temples and public edifices seem to have been built. All of these buildings, the chronicler adds, were surrounded by fruit trees, planted so thickly and in such a manner that the square could hardly be entered.

The caziques affected great state, and carried their exclusion so far as to receive messages from other chiefs only through officers delegated for that purpose. Oviedo illustrates their etiquette by an incident which befel himself, when he visited the chief of Tecoatega, which he did soon after his arrival in the country, in company with the chaplain of the governor. The chief, he says, neither spoke to him, nor deigned to look at him, until informed that he was not only attached to the household of the emperor, but was a relative of the governor. The chief then laid aside his gravity, and asked and answered questions with much spirit, "showing clearly that he was a man of talent." He nevertheless sent one of his attendants to question the servants of the party, to ascertain if what they had told him was true.

Cacao, or rather the seeds of the cacao, here, as in many other parts of tropical America, answered the chief purpose of currency, when the transaction between buyer and seller was not simple barter. There were fixed market days; but, by a singular rule, the privilege of trading was confined to the women, and to boys not yet arrived at puberty. No man was allowed to enter, or even to look into the *tianguez*, or market. The people of friendly villages might traffic with each other, and were freely admitted into each other's markets. All articles of production, metals, woods, fruits, and vegetables, as well as all varieties of manufactures, were exposed for sale in the *tianguez*.

They were very industrious in their habits, and skillful workers in gold and copper, and in cotton and other fabrics of the pita, or agave. They cultivated cotton extensively, and worked it curiously, probably in the very manner still practised, and which is described in a preceding chapter. Of this their clothing was made. "The men wore a sort of doublet without sleeves, and a belt, which, after passing around the body, was carried between the legs, and fastened behind. The women had a *nagua*, hanging from the girdle

as low as the knees. Those of the better orders had them falling as low as the ankle, and also wore a handkerchief covering their breasts. Both sexes wore sandals made of deer skins, and called *cutares*, which were fastened by a cotton cord, passing between the toes and around the heel.

Their personal ornaments were chiefly of gold and pearls. The people of Nicoya, which Oviedo expressly tells us were Chorotegans, pierced their lower lips, and introduced "round pieces of white bone," and sometimes "a button of gold." The women of this section the chronicler specially commends, on account of their symmetry of figure and beauty of feature.

Their arms were identical with those used by the Mexicans, and consisted of lances and arrows pointed with flint, copper, or the bones of fishes, and a species of sword called in Mexico *mahquahuitl*, which was a tough piece of wood, with blades of obsidian set on either edge, and wielded with both hands, constituting a formidable weapon. For defence they used shields of wood, covered with hide, and ornamented with feathers, which by their color and figures which they formed, signified the rank and position of the bearer.

They had also quilted jackets and short breeches covering the thighs, made of cotton, which an arrow penetrated with difficulty, and which the Spaniards found to be so effective for defence that they adopted them for themselves. The accompanying cut of a soldier's dress is copied from a Mexican manuscript. The letter *a* indicates the feather head-dress; *c*, a plate of metal covering part of the face, and *d*, the cotton-quilted armor. They did not poison their weapons. Gold seems to have been used only for ornamental purposes, and for making little idols, to be worshipped in their houses and temples. They had

amongst them certain manuscripts, which the Spaniards called books, and which seem to have been identical with those possessed by the Mexicans. They were painted "in black and red colors, on parchment made from the skins of deer, and were a hand's breadth or upwards in width, and ten or twelve yards long, and folded like a screen. "Though these characters," continues Oviedo, "were neither letters nor figures, they were not without their meaning."

RELIGION, ETC.

We are assured by Oviedo that while they differed widely in their habits and modes of life, the inhabitants of Nicaragua nevertheless agreed substantially in their religion. This appears to have been the same, or very nearly the same with that of Mexico; and amongst the Niquirans the names of the gods, as well as the rites with which they were worshipped, including the practice of human sacrifices, were identical with those of the Aztecs and their neighbors in the valley of Anahuac. The nature of their beliefs, as also the prescriptions of their ritual, appear very clearly from the records preserved by Oviedo. Among these is a transcript of the proceedings of a commission, of which the Fray Francisco de Bobadilla, Provincial of the Order of Mercy, was the head, delegated by Pedro Arias de Avila, Governor of Nicaragua, in 1528, to procure an exact account of the condition of the Indians, to ascertain the nature of their religion, and to discover how far they had been affected by the introduction of Christianity. It was on the 28th of September of the same year that Bobadilla arrived in the province of Niquira, and commenced his investigation. The first who appeared before him was a chief named Chichoyatona, whom Bobadilla piously proceeded to baptize, naming him Alonzo de Herrera. He then inquired of him if he knew there was

a God who had created man, the world, and all things. But Chichoyatona either did not know, or else did not care to answer questions, and the friar got nothing from him. He next tried an old man named Cipat, but he replied to the same question that he neither knew nor cared, and was accordingly dismissed. It is not, however, to be supposed that Cipat was really so ignorant; for the Indians of Nicaragua, in common with those of every part of the continent, were extremely jealous of all things relating to their religion. Bobadilla, no wise discouraged, tried another chief, named Mizeztoy, and this time with better success. Mizeztoy stated that he was a Christian; that is to say, had had water poured on his head by a priest, but had really quite forgot what name had been given to him. The result of his examination is given by the chronicler as follows:

Friar. Do you know who made heaven and earth? *Indian.* My parents told me, when I was a child, that it was *Famagostad* and *Zipaltonal*, the first male and the second female.—*F.* What are they, men or animals? *I.* I do not know; my parents never saw them; nor do I know whether they dwell in the air or elsewhere.—*F.* Who created man, and all things? *I.* As I have already said, *Famagostad* and *Zipaltonal*, a younger named *Ecalchot*, a *Guegue* (or *very old* personage), and the little *Ciagat*.—*F.* Where are they? *I.* I do not know, except that they are our great gods, whom we call *Teotes*.—*F.* Have they parents or ancestors? *I.* No; for they are gods.—*F.* Do the *Teotes* eat? *I.* I do not know; but when we make war, we do so that they may eat the blood of our enemies whom we have slain or taken prisoners. We scatter the blood on all sides, in order that the *Teotes* may make sure of it; for we know not on which side they dwell, nor even that they do really consume it.—*F.* Do you know, or have you even heard, that the world has been destroyed since the creation? *I.* I have heard our fathers say that it was destroyed by water, a very long time ago.—*F.* Were all men drowned? *I.* I do not know; but the *Teotes* rebuilt the world, and placed upon it men and animals again.—*F.* How did the *Teotes* escape? upon a mountain or in a canoe? *I.* They are gods, *how could they drown?*—*F.* Were all animals and the birds drowned? *I.* Those now existing were created anew by the *Teotes*, as well as men and all things.—*F.* Are all the Indians ac-

quainted with what you have just told me? *I.* The priests of the temples and the caziques know it.—*F.* By whom are the *Teotes* served? *I.* The old men say that those who are slain in battle serve the *Teotes*, and that those who die in the natural way, go under the earth.—*F.* Which is most honorable, to go under the earth, or to serve the *Teotes*? *I.* By far to serve the the *Teotes*, because we shall then meet with our fathers.—*F.* But if your fathers have died in their beds, how can you meet them? *I.* Our fathers are themselves *Teotes*.—*F.* Can the *Teotes* bring the dead to life, and if so, where are the reawakened dead? *I.* All that I know is, that infants who die before they are weaned, and before they have tasted maize, will be raised again, and return to their fathers' houses, where their fathers will recognize and provide for them; whilst, on the other hand, those who die at a more advanced age will never come to life again.—*F.* But if the father should die before his children come to life again, how can he recognize or provide for them? *I.* If the fathers die, I know not what becomes of the children.—*F.* Finally what is their destiny? *I.* I know only what I have told you; and it must be true, because our fathers have told us so."

The Fray Bobadilla next questioned the cazique Abalgoalteogan, who also bore the name of Francisco, and who said he was a Christian. The Fray asked him, "if he was glad that he was a Christian?" to which he replied that, "he thought he was," and gave as a reason for his felicitation that only Christians went to heaven, while "all others went to hell with the devil." Being a more hopeful subject than the rest, the Fray proceeded to interrogate him. His testimony, as to the gods, coincided with that of Mizeztoy, and with him he affirmed that all knowledge concerning them was perpetuated by oral tradition; that formerly the priests had converse with the gods, but that since the arrival of the Christians, the latter had withdrawn from earth; that although the *Teotes* are of flesh, and male and female, yet that they are uncreated, immortal, enjoy eternal youth, and reside in the heavens. That the earth was once destroyed by water, and became a great sea, and that afterwards *Famagostad* and *Zipaltonal* descended, dispersed the waters, and recreated all things. That of the dead, the good alone go above with

the *Teotes*, the bad to a subterranean abode named *Miquetanteot;* that there is no resurrection of the body, but by the act of death "there comes forth from the mouth something which resembles the person, called *julio*, which goes to the place of the *Teotes*. It is immortal: but the body decays forever." The good are those "who take care of the temples, and observe the laws of friendship; the wicked are those who do differently, and they are sent under the earth."

The Fray next interrogated an old man, past sixty years of age, named Tacoteyda, who was a priest in one of the temples of Nicaragua. When he was asked if he was a Christian, he said No, that he was old, and why should he become a Christian? Whereupon the Fray told him, that if he became a Christian, it would be a source of great good to him here and hereafter; but that if he did not, he would inevitably go to the devil. But the old priest was firm in his own faith, and would not be baptized. He concurred entirely with the others, in representing *Famagostad* and *Zipaltonal* as themselves uncreated, the creators of heaven and earth, and the greatest of gods. He added, that they were like the Indians themselves, forever young, dwelt in the heavens towards the rising of the sun, and that their aid in war, or for other purposes, previously to the arrival of the Christians, was procured by addressing petitions to heaven.

Tacoteyda testified that *Famagostad* and *Zipaltonal* received to themselves, at their abiding place in the eastern heavens, those who had lived worthily, or had been slain in battle, but that all others were sent under the earth; that those who went above did not carry their bodies with them, but only *a heart*, or rather that which was the cause of life, and which in departing from the body caused death. The Fray asked him what the gods would do when all men ceased to live. To which the Indian priest replied, very frankly, that he did not know; nor did he know anything of a flood which had destroyed the world. Altogether, his examination does not

appear to have been satisfactory to the Fray Bobadilla, who dismissed him, and sent for an Indian named Coyen, who was very aged, exceeding eighty years, and whose head was white as cotton wool. He said he was a Christian, or rather that water had been poured on his head, and he had had a new name given him, which, however, he had forgotten. His testimony, in respect to the gods, confirmed what had been said by the others; they were immortal—resembled the Indians—were ever young—dwelt on high—anciently communicated with the priests in the temples, but did so no longer, and loved the blood and hearts of children, and the perfume of resins. He had heard, from his ancestors, that the world had been destroyed by water in remote times, and that none were saved, but that the gods had created the world anew. The good went on high with the *Teotes*, the bad below the earth. The body putrefied in the ground, but the principle of life, which dwelt in the heart, and which was immortal, went above.

Upon the 30th of the same month, the Fray resumed his inquiries, and called up the chief of Xaxoita, whose name was Quibiat, a comparatively young man, who was not a Christian, but desired to become one, whereat Bobadilla was so delighted, that he not only baptized him, but gave him his own name. The Fray undoubtedly thought he had found a profitable subject, but Quibiat answered every question with "I do not know!" So he was sent off, and an Indian named Atochinal called in, who, although but a sorry Christian, nevertheless answered all the questions put to him, in precisely the same way with those who had been previously examined, except that he did not know whether the world was destroyed by fire or water, only that his fathers said that it had been destroyed.

The Fray afterwards collected thirteen Indians, priests, caziques, and others, and made various inquiries of them, which, with their answers, are given below. It should be

remembered, however, that the Fray was now amongst the Niquirans, or people of Mexican stock. The Fray first asked them if they were the original inhabitants of the country; to which they answered, that although their ancestors had been here from time immemorial, they were not the true aborigines, but came originally from a distant country called *Ticomega Emaguategа*, which was situated towards the west, i. e. N. W. They quitted because they had masters who ill-treated them.

"*Friar.* Were these masters Indians or Christians? *Indian.* Indians.—*F.* What was the service which was required of your fathers? *I.* They tilled the ground, and served their masters as we now serve the Christians. Their masters overtasked, abused, and even ate them. It was fear which induced them to emigrate. Their masters came from another country, and by numbers and force overcame them.—*F.* What is your religion? Whom do you worship? *I.* We adore *Famagostad* and *Zipaltonal*, who are our gods.—*F.* Who sends you rain and all other things? *I.* The rain is sent by *Quiateot*, son of the god *Home-Atelite* and the goddess *Home-Ateciguat.* They dwell at the extremity of the world, where the sun goes. —*F.* Have they ever lived on earth? *I.* No.—*F.* From whence do they come. *I.* We know not.—*F.* Who made the heavens and earth, and all things else? *I. Famagostad and Zipaltonal.*—*F.* Did they make the father and mother of Quiateot? *I.* No; what relates to water is an entirely different thing, but we know very little of the matter.—*F.* Has Quiateot a wife? *I.* No.—*F.* Who serve him? *I.* We think he ought to have servants, but we know not who they are.—*F.* What does he eat? *I.* What we do; for our food has come from the gods.—*F.* Which do you regard as the most powerful, the father, mother, or son? *I.* They are equal to one another.—*F.* When do you ask for rain, and what do you do to obtain it? *I.* We go to the temple dedicated to him, and sacrifice some young children. After having cut off their heads, we sprinkle the blood on the images and stone idols in the house of prayer consecrated to our gods, and which, in our language, is called *Teobat.*—*F.* What do you do with the bodies of the sacrificed? *I.* Those of the children we bury; those of the men are eaten by the caziques and chiefs, but not by the rest of the people.—*F.* When this is done, does the god send you rain? *I.* Sometimes he does, but sometimes not.—*F.* Why do you go to the temples, and what do you say and do there? *I.* The temples are to us

what the churches are to Christians; there are our gods, and there we burn perfumes in their honor; we ask of them health if we are sick; rain if it is needed, for we are poor, and if the earth should be parched we can have no fruits;—in short, we ask of them all things of which we stand in need. The principal cazique enters the temple and prays in the name of all; the rest of the Indians do not enter. The cazique remains there for prayer an entire year, and during that time never leaves the temple. When he comes forth a great festival is celebrated in his honor, with dancing and feasting. His nostrils are then pierced, to show that he has been pontiff of the temple, which is esteemed to be the greatest of honors. Another chief is then sought to take his place, so that there may always be one in the temple. As to those temples, which are only a kind of oratorio, any one can place in them one of his children; and any one who desires may enter, provided he is unmarried, and on condition of not having had connection with any woman for an entire year; that is to say, until the caziques and priests who are in the temple shall have come out.—*F.* Are married persons who are willing to quit their wives and go into the temples, suffered to do so? *I.* Yes. But at the expiration of the year they must return to their wives, and if caziques, resume their government.—*F.* How are they provided with food? *I.* It is brought to them by children from the house of the priests, and during all the time they are in the temple no one can enter it beyond the vestibule, except those young persons who carry provisions.—*F.* While in the temple do they converse with the gods? *I.* For a long time our gods have not visited or conversed with us. If our ancestors may be believed, they were once in the habit of doing so. All that we know is, that the person charged with praying to the gods, asks of them all things needful.—*F.* In time of war, do they come forth from the temple? *I.* No. The vestibule of the temple is very convenient for meeting.—*F.* Who clean and sweep the temples? *I.* Young boys only; married or old men take no part in the matter.—*F.* Have you, during the year, any prescribed days of general attendance at the temple? *I.* We have twenty-one festival days for amusement, drinking and dancing around the court, but no one is permitted to enter the temple.—*F.* Do the women take any part in collecting the straw, bringing wood, or anything else which may be of use either in building or repairing the temple? *I.* The women can take no part in anything which concerns the temple, and are never admitted within it.—*F.* Since you sometimes sacrifice women, do you not violate the law which forbids them from entering the temple? *I.* When women are sacrificed in the temples or principal houses of prayer, they are first put to death in the court; but it is allow-

able to introduce them into the ordinary temples.—*F.* What do you do with the blood of those who are sacrificed in the courts of the principal temples? *I.* It is brought into the temple, and the priest sprinkles it on the idols with his hands.—*F.* What do you do with the body? *I.* It is eaten; except the bodies of females, which are not touched. When the victim is a man, the priest has his share.—*F.* Are those who are sacrificed voluntary victims? are they selected by lot? or is it a punishment inflicted upon them? *I.* They are slaves, or prisoners of war.—*F.* As you esteem your gods so much, how can you sacrifice persons of infamous condition to them? *I.* Our ancestors did so, and we do likewise.—*F.* Do you make any other offerings in your temples? *I.* Every one brings such offerings as he pleases, such as fowls, maize, fish, fruits, etc. They are carried to the temple by the young people.—*F.* Who eats these offerings? *I.* The priests of the temple; and if any remains, it is eaten by the boys.—*F.* Are the provisions cooked before being carried to the temple? *I.* Always.—*F.* Does any one taste of these offerings before the priest? *I.* No one presumes to touch or taste of them before him; for this is considered one of the most important regulations of the temple.—*F.* Why do you make a self-sacrifice by cutting the tongue? *I.* We always do this before we purchase, sell, or conclude a bargain, because we believe it will bring us a fortunate result. The god we invoke on such occasions is named *Mixcoa.*—*F.* Who is your god *Mixcoa?* *I.* Carved stones, which we invoke in his honor.—*F.* How do you know this god will aid your bargains? *I.* Because when we invoke him, we make good bargains.—*F.* Has Nicaragua ever been visited by any other nation than the Spaniards, who might have taught you all these ceremonies, ordered you to pour water on your heads, or to cut off the foreskin? and did you know that the Christians were on the eve of coming to your country? *I.* We know nothing of all this; but since you have come among us, you have told us it was good to pour water on the head, and to be baptized.—*F.* What is it that is cleansed by pouring water on the head? *I.* The heart.—*F.* How do you know that the heart is cleansed? *I.* We only know that it purifies us; it is the duty of your priests to explain how.—*F.* At your death how do you dispose of your property, and what precautions do you take for another life? *I.* When we die, we recommend our children and property to our survivors, that they may not perish, but be taken care of after we are dead. He who lives a good life, after death goes on high among the *Teotes;* if a bad one, below the earth.—*F.* Who are your gods? *I. Famogostad* and *Zipaltonal;* and when we go to them they say, "here come our children!"—*F.* Why do you break the idols upon your tombs? *I.* In order that they may think

of us for twenty or thirty days; after that they forget us.—*F.* Why, at the death of any one of you, do you paint yourselves with red paints, decorate yourselves with plumes, singing, playing on instruments, and celebrating festivals? *I.* We do nothing of the kind. When our children die, we envelop them in cotton cloth, and bury them before our doors. We leave all our property to our children, who are our heirs, if legitimate; that is to say, the children of a husband and wife, and born in the house; but they are not our heirs, if born of other women, or out of the house; for those only are legitimate, who are born in the house. If we die without children, all we possess is buried with us.—*F.* What are your funeral ceremonies? *I.* Upon the death of a chief or cazique, a large quantity of cotton cloth, shirts, cloaks, plumes, hunting horns, and all sorts of articles belonging to the dead, a portion of each kind, is burned with the body, together with all the gold he possessed. Afterwards all the ashes are gathered together, placed in an earthen vase, and buried before the house of the deceased.—*F.* Why do you not bury them in your temples? *I.* Because it is not customary.—*F.* Do you place provisions in the vase? *I.* At the time of burning, a little maize is placed in a calabash, by the side of the dead body, and burned with it.—*F.* The heart, *julio*, or soul, does it die with the body? *I.* If the deceased has lived well, the *julio* goes on high with the gods; if not, it perishes with the body and is no more.—*F.* Do the Indians see anything at the moment of dying? *I.* They have visions of persons, lizards, serpents, and many things which fill them with fear. They know thereby that they must die. The objects which they see do not speak, but strive to frighten them. Sometimes the dead return to this world, and appear to the living for the same object.—*F.* Do not the crosses placed above the dead, by the Christians, protect them? *I.* Much; for since this practice of the Christians was introduced, we have no more visions.—*F.* Who taught you to give your idols the form which they have? *I.* Our fathers left us idols of stone, and from them, as models, have we made those in our houses.—*F.* Why do you have them in your houses? *I.* That we may easily invoke them when necessary.—*F.* Do you sacrifice to the idols in your houses? *I.* No.

"*Friar.* Before your temples stand earthen huts of a circular form, and terminating in a point; they resemble a sheaf of grain in appearance; the summit is reached by a stairway through the middle of the hut: what is the name of these huts, and what is their use? *Indian.* Their name is *Tezarit;* the priest of the temple, whose name is *Tamagoz*, ascends to the summit of the hut, and there makes the sacrifices of the victims, sprinkling their blood on the stone idols."

The Fray Bobabilla afterwards continued his inquiries in respect to other matters, with what results will be seen elsewhere. He ascertained that the god of hunger was called *Vizetot*, and the god of the air *Chiquinau* or *Hecact*, which last was probably intended for *Ehecatl*, the Mexican name for air or wind. He also ascertained the names of the days of their months, which entirely coincided with those of Mexico, as also many interesting facts connected with their religious ceremonies. They affirmed that they had twenty-one principal festivals each year, on which occasions no work was done, but the entire people surrendered themselves to rejoicing, and the observance of the rites prescribed for these occasions. During these periods they abstained from all connection with their wives; the females sleeping within the houses, and the males without. This abstinence was deemed most essential, and any infraction, it was supposed, would be summarily punished by the gods. It does not appear that fasting was enjoined on any occasion. The Spaniards were very much surprised, both here and in Mexico, at finding a well-established rite, corresponding entirely with that of confession, as it existed in the Catholic Church. The confession was not, however, made to the priests, but to certain old men, who always maintained the strictest reserve, in respect to what was communicated to them. The penances were imposed for the benefit of the temple. These old men were chosen by the council, and wore a calabash suspended from their necks, as a mark of dignity. It was requisite that they should be unmarried, and distinguished for their virtues. Neglect of religious ceremonies and blasphemy of the gods, were regarded as offences requiring early confession and absolution, lest they should entail sickness or death on the offender. No person was required to confess himself, however, until after he had attained the age of puberty.

They seem to have had a great variety of superstitious notions, corresponding generally with those prevailing

amongst the other Indian nations, both to the northward and southward. Amongst these was the practice of throwing sticks or grass upon certain stones at the road side, in passing; by which they thought they would be less subjected to hunger and fatigue. They had also a superstition something like that of the "evil eye," amongst the Arabs and some other Oriental nations. They supposed that there were persons whose looks were mortal, and whose eyes were fatal to children. They had, also a great fear of sorcerers, whom they called *texoxes*.

Oviedo has not described the temples to which he so frequently refers, but Cerezeda informs us that they were built of timber, and thatched; but large, with many low, dark, inner chapels. These, it seems, were surrounded by large courts, beyond which none except the priests and the cazique during his year's novitiate, dared to pass. Besides these, there were what the Indians called *Tezarit*, oratorios, or "high places," which stood before or around the temples, and which Oviedo describes as being conical or pyramidal in shape, ascended by steps. Upon these the human victims were sacrificed. "Within view of their temples," says Cerezeda, who is more explicit, "there were divers bases or pillars like pulpits, erected in the fields, of unburned brick, and a certain kind of clammy earth, called bitumen, which are from eight to fifteen steps in height. The summit is flat, and varies in size, according to the purposes for which it is designed. Some are broad enough to hold ten men. In the middle of this space standeth a stone, higher than the rest, equalling a man's body in length; and this accursed stone is the altar of their miserable sacrifices. Upon the appointed day of sacrifice, the king ascendeth another of these altars, whence he may view the ceremony, and the people gather about; when the priest, in full view of all, from this eminent place, performeth the office of preacher, and shaking a sharp knife of stone which he holds in his hand, proclaims that a

sacrifice is to be made, as also whether it is to be a prisoner, or one who is a slave, or has been kept from infancy for this purpose. For every chief maintains certain persons for sacrifice, who are fed daintily, and so far from being sad and sorrowful, in anticipation of their fate, are persuaded that, by this kind of death, they shall be turned into gods and heavenly creatures. They are reverently received wherever they go, and whatever they ask is given to them. Those to be sacrificed are stretched out flat on the stone whereof I have spoken, and the priest, cutting open the breast, plucks out the heart, wherewith he anoints the mouths of the idols. The body is then cut in pieces, and distributed amongst the priests, nobility, and the people. But the head is hung, as a trophy, upon the branches of certain small trees, which are preserved for that purpose near the place of sacrifice. The parts which are distributed they partly bury before their doors, but the rest they burn, leaving the ashes in the field of sacrifice."

According to Herrara, the high-places above described, stood within the courts of the temples. He also informs us, that the sacrifices were frequently attended by ceremonies, in which all the people joined,—by dances, penances, and processions. In these processions, the priests wore cotton surplices, sometimes short, and sometimes long, hanging to the ground and heavily fringed. They carried also little bags of powdered herbs. The people followed, each person bearing a little flag, "with the representation of the idol which he most venerated," and carrying also their weapons of war. "Their standard," quaintly observes the chronicler, "was the picture of the devil set on a spear, and carried by the eldest priest, the religious men singing the while, to the place of worship. The ground was then covered with carpets, and strewed with flowers. When the standard halted, the singing ceased, and all commenced praying. At a signal from the chief priest, they punctured various parts of their bodies,

and receiving the blood on paper, rubbed it on the face of the idol; and, in the mean time, the youths skirmished and danced in honor of the festival. The wounds were cured with the powder and herbs carried by the priests." "The ceremonies ended," says Cerezeda, "the priests bow down the spear a little, at which time, the priests first, and then the nobles, and lastly the people, whisper the idol in the ear, and every one uttereth the tempestuous outrage of his mind, and bending the head to one shoulder, with reverent trembling and mumbling, they humbly beseech that, luckily and happily, he would favor their desires."

There was another rite, practised at certain times, connected with a worship which prevailed to a greater extent in America than has generally been supposed, and which discovers to us the rationale of many remarkable observances otherwise inexplicable. It consisted in sprinkling blood, drawn from the organs of generation, upon maize, which was afterwards distributed, and eaten with great solemnity. This scenical rite, under one form or another, may be traced through the rituals of all the semi-civilized nations of America, in strict parallelism with certain Phallic rites of the Hindus, and of those other numerous nations of the old world, which were devoted to a similar primitive religion.

The Fray Bobadilla was piously indignant at the practices of the Indians, and longed to be able to prove to them how insignificant their *Teotes* were as compared with the God and his subordinates whom he worshipped. In this respect he was favored, for there were several manifestations from above in his behalf, hardly less extraordinary than those which befel the Spaniards in Mexico, where the Virgin and the archangel Michael visibly, and in person, assisted in the fights against the Indians. Thus, there had been no rain in Nicaragua for a long time; but upon the Fray's arrival at the Indian towns, it rained for five consecutive days, which he regarded as a miracle, and straightway assured the Indians if

they would become Christians, "it would rain whenever it was wanted, the seasons always be good, and, that, besides, they would thereby save their souls." The Indians approved of the rain, and in order to secure it, allowed the Fray to collect "a large number of idols, heads of deer, and parcels stained with blood, in the public square, and give them to the flames." They even allowed him to convert their temple into a Christian church, which he did by sprinkling it with holy water, and setting up within it a cross and an image of the Virgin, which last he especially enjoined them to keep clean. According to the notary of Granada, quoted by Oviedo, the Fray baptized not less than 43,000 Indians within the space of nine days; this was at the average rate of about 5,000 a-day, and may be called a "fair business." But the miracle of the five days' steady rain was nothing compared with what happened to the Fray in the province of Matearas, where he found a child dying, to which he administered the rite of baptism, whereupon the babe ejaculated "*cruz!*" and died! This so astonished the mother, that she requested to be baptized also, which was no sooner done, than she exclaimed that she saw her child ascending to heaven. The child had a magnificent funeral in consequence, and the Fray made the most of the miracle, inducing not less than ten thousand Indians to be baptized on the strength of it.

But the zeal of Bobadilla did not stop here; he burned "a vast number of idols, temples, and oratorios, erected crosses on their ruins, as also on the roads and elevations, and gave the Indians images of the Virgin and a quantity of holy water." But the chronicler did not put much faith in these conversions; for he says that he would agree to give a *peso de or* for every Indian able to tell his baptismal name, and repeat the Pater and Ave, and take a *maravedi* for every one who could not, and make money by the operation. In his opinion these baptisms did no good, and were only valuable to swell reports to be sent to Spain. "Far better," he sensibly

ejaculates, "is it to instruct and truly Christianize one Indian, than to baptize thousands, who know not what it is to be a Christian, or what to do to be saved. I should like to ask those," he continues, "who have been god-fathers to four and five hundred Indians, what they have done for their god-children?"

TERRA COTTA FROM OMETEPEC. ONE-FOURTH SIZE.

OUTLINE

OF

POLITICAL HISTORY.

OUTLINE

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POLITICAL HISTORY.

CHAPTER I.

THE SPANISH-AMERICAN REPUBLICS—THE CAUSES OF THEIR FAILURE.

THE Spanish-American Republics, from their birth, have exhibited a spectacle full of sorrow to the friends of free institutions throughout the world. Their general history has been one of anarchy and blood, with scarcely a page from which we do not turn in horror and disgust. The partizan struggles which, in our own country, come and go like a summer storm, agitating the public mind for an instant, but leaving it all the quieter when past, have been marked in these Republics by a spirit of fierce intolerance, which can only be born of the deadliest antagonism, and of which few among us can form any adequate conception.

The first effort of a triumphant party is not only to crush but exterminate its opponent; and it does not hesitate to adopt the extreme measures of confiscation, exile, and death, for the attainment of its objects. So long as it wields the

power, it is absolute, tyrannical, despotic. He who entertains principles or opinions counter to the dominant faction, must guard his words and actions, under peril to property and life.

The consequences are plain and inevitable; they are hate, distrust, intrigue, and revolution. The gall which here flows in harmless, inky torrents, through an untrammelled press, and the energy which exhausts itself in the forum, or dies away in idle reverberations in the domes of our legislative halls, there rankles in the heart of the man who feels himself the victim of proscription and oppression, and nerves him for deeds which would chill the blood of our bitterest partisan, after the depletion of a newspaper article, or an hour's harangue: and the skill in combination and arrangement, which with us is devoted to no worse purpose than that of packing conventions, dictating the decrees of a caucus, and canvassing a city, finds scope and verge enough in deep-laid, perilous plots against the existing order of things,—for whatever the tendency of that order, it wears the garb of wrong.

This intolerance precludes the existence of parties,—as we understand them,—of parties which are the safeguards of every free commonwealth, and necessary to its healthful existence. Precluded from a free expression of opinions, and shut off from legitimate action, every opposition is driven to move in secret conclave, and its measures bear the form, if they do not conceal the spirit, of treason. Discovery is persecution, perhaps death; and scarce a possibility of relief or change is offered, except through that last and most dangerous resort, Revolution.

It is easy to conceive how a system of detestable espionage on one hand, and a scarcely less detestable system of intrigue on the other, must spring up under such a condition of things. The man of the opposition, however laudable his objects or pure his motives, becomes of necessity a conspirator; and every conspirator is, by equal necessity, a prey to

suspicion, which, in its turn, where the perils are so great, under some real or fancied necessity, leads to treachery, and entails a long series of bloody revenges.

The disastrous results of these conditions, are not only felt in the general political system, but in every part of the social and civil body. Law, that sacred intangibility, which, next to God, merits and should receive the respect and obedience of men, here loses its divinity, and, confounded with the tyranny and the bad passions and impulses of the men who should be its impartial ministers, but who wield its terrors for the worst of purposes, is despised and contemned. That religious deference from which it derives its majesty and force, and without which it degenerates into a pretext, is utterly destroyed, and society is resolved into a chaos of conflicting elements, where might lords it over right, where life nor property is safe, and where neither honor, virtue, nor wisdom can long survive.

It will, no doubt, be conceded, indeed it is evident, that the demoralization of the Spanish American Republics, is the proximate cause of the intolerance which we have pointed out. But whence has this demoralization resulted? The Spanish character is not deficient in many of the best attributes of humanity; the Spanish people are not less susceptible to lofty impulses than our own. There is not in their individual nor in their collective character anything which renders them incapable of exercising the rights, or enjoying rationally the benefits, of self-government. And those of our people who complacently ascribe the general failure of the Spanish Republics, to a radical, psychological defect of the Spanish race, commit a grievous, but a very natural, error. With the exception of Chili, all of them have been, thus far, undoubted failures. But it should be remembered, that the origin of these Republics was widely different from that of our own. Among all the impulses to colonization on this continent, we seek in vain for any of that exalted character which brought

our fathers hither. Amongst all the adventurers who flocked to America, our ancestors alone had practically solved the grand problems of civil and religious freedom. Very different was the advent of the little band of self-relying, earnest men, despising and despised of kings, who silently sought a refuge in a new continent, relying on their own right arms and their God for support, and that of the steel-cased cavaliers, the pride and flower of Spain, impelled by ambition and avarice, sustained by the proudest monarch of the globe, enjoying the full sunshine of royal favor, followed and cheered on by the enthusiasts of a proselyting faith, inflamed by the wildest dreams of conquest, and striking for the dominion of the earth.

On the one hand the world saw, taking deeper and wider root, a people jealous of their rights, securing every possible concession in their charters, resisting every encroachment on their privileges, and religiously excluding from their midst the aristocratic forms of the Old World, becoming daily more self-relying, and more imbued with the spirit, and familiar with the forms of self-government. The blessings and privileges of freedom came to them, as the reward of long, unwearying, enlightened endeavor; when attained, like the slowly accumulated competence of the laborer, they knew how to value and how to use them. Our revolution was the consummation of centuries of well-directed, rational effort for freedom.

In Spanish America, on the other hand, amidst the magnificence of the tropics, and the fragments of aboriginal greatness, became diffused a people, reflecting alike the splendors and the corruptions of a powerful court and of an arrogant aristocracy. The highest incentives to action were the favors of artificial and hereditary greatness, or the accumulation, by whatsoever means, of that wealth by which these favors might be purchased. The fame of those whose names fill the earlier pages of the history of this people, is

that of conquerors alone. They encountered unprecedented dangers, displayed an energy unparalleled in human achievement, overturned empires, and trod with bloody steps over more than half a continent. Yet it was for the aggrandizement of the crown of Castile and Leon alone; and the iron men who executed these great deeds, prostrated themselves before the throne of their sovereign, to receive their reward in marquisates, commands, and grants of lands and mines, and powers almost arbitrary over the conquered inhabitants of the New World. After them followed the Viceroys, emulating the kings of Europe in their regal pomp, and setting up mimic courts, amongst a new aristocracy, more rigorous and exacting than the old. Here, in short, were reproduced, in many of their most odious forms, the systems of monarchical Europe, followed by their entire train of corruptions in Church and State. Power and wealth, from the first, rapidly concentrated in the hands of the few; and ignorance and superstition brooded with leaden wings over the minds of the many. There were no longer empires to conquer; no more Montezumas and Atahualpas, upon whose humbled shoulders a new Cortez and Pizarro might rise to renown; and the years which followed were marked by none of those startling achievements which lend a lustre to wrong, and throw a glory over crime, blinding us to its enormity, and almost reconciling us to its contemplation. The Viceroyalties of Mexico, Guatemala, and Peru, were no longer the prizes of the brave and daring; they were filled by the arrogant minions of a court, and attained by arts which a Cortez and Alvarado would have scorned to use. A degenerate aristocracy filled the places of the conquistadors, and added the vices of effeminacy and indolence to the crimes of cruelty and oppression.

Under this order of things, nothing beyond a very qualified advance, on the part of the people, was possible. And this advance, such as it was, took place in spite of the obsta-

cles which this very order of things interposed. But it was not sufficiently great, to lead to a comprehension of what constituted the primary and essential elements of civil freedom. Truly Republican Institutions are the loftiest developments of human wisdom; and their existence pre-supposes, not only a general diffusion of knowledge, but high attainment in it, amongst the people at large. Their permanence depends upon the general intelligence and morality. In the Spanish American colonies, it is obvious, such attainment was impossible. They did not even keep pace with the meliorations and improvements, which the lapse of time was slowly but surely bringing about in Europe, and which even Spain herself could not resist. These colonies were borne down and restrained, not only by the weight of an irresponsible local government, imperial except in name, but by that of a decaying and exacting empire on another continent, which forced the life's blood from their veins to sustain its own languid existence,—a double curse, which those colonies most deeply felt, but which they knew not how to remove. The sense of wrong was keen amongst their people, but their ideas of redress were vague and indefinite; rather the offspring of the instincts of self-preservation and revenge, than the suggestions of reason and experience.

In due course of events, by a series of regular advances, came on our own revolution,—a struggle for objects clearly defined and well understood. It was successful, and the proximate cause of that great civil and moral convulsion, which burst the ligatures that priestcraft and kingcraft had been binding, fold on fold, for a thousand years, on the passive limbs of Europe, and which we call the French Revolution. Events like these, in spite of Viceroys, and edicts of suppression, and the whole machinery of despotism, could not be kept unknown to the world. The Indian, brooding over his wrongs in the deep valleys of the Andes, or delving in mines of El Pasco in Peru, the Creole, on the narrow

slopes of Chili, or the higher plains of Mexico, and around the volcanoes and broad lakes of Central America, heard the distant tread of revolutions,—and his heart leapt, his eye kindled, and his muscles tightened as he heard. The leaven sank deep in the Spanish American Colonies, and thoughts of change, and high aspirations for the future, too often darkened by hate and jealousy, and not always unmingled with the wild longings for retribution and revenge, thenceforth filled the minds of their people.

Continental Spain early felt the shock of the Revolution in France; hoary with abuses, and blackened with corruption, yet glorious in recollections, the crumbling fabric of her greatness fell, never to rise again. Her mission of conquest and propagandism was ended, and all that was, or is, or will be left of her, is her Great Past! Yet in her fall, the colonies, like the ivy around the old tower which the earthquake has prostrated, still clung to the rüins. The power of the Viceroys was fresh and strong, while that of the King was weak. They still cherished their allegiance for the throne of Ferdinand and Isabella, although profaned by a Bonaparte, and surrounded by foreign bayonets; and exhibited to the world the singular spectacle of an empire vigorous at the extremities, while dead at the heart. There was something admirable in the devotion with which they clung to their traditions. Even the colonists themselves forgot for a moment their grievances and wrongs, in recollection of their past glories and greatness, and in contemplation of the land of their fathers, the dominions of the Fifth Charles, prostrate and powerless at the feet of France. Spain, harsh, exacting, cruel, was still their mother country; and so far as patriotism consists in simple love of country, the Spaniard and his descendant is always a patriot. The Creole girl, though centuries intervene, and her ancestral blood has been fed from a hundred diverse springs, still cherishes with pride the lute-like, liquid pronunciation of her Andalusian ancestors; or in

indignant reply to an unacceptable proposal, with the brow of a Catherine, and the lip of a queen, ejaculates, "*Soy una Catalinà!*" I am a Cataline girl!

With the restoration in Spain, the feeling of patriotic sympathy among the Spanish colonists died away, and they felt, in the still unrelenting rule of the Viceroys, that the reforms which that restoration had brought about in Europe, were not for them. The Viceroys, on the other hand, with the colonial aristocracy, and the priesthood—themselves, in their almost unlimited power and great wealth, constituting a most formidable ecclesiastical oligarchy,—saw with alarm the progress of these very reforms. The representative principle had been introduced into Spain; the power of the monarch, hitherto practically absolute, had been limited; the aristocracy reformed; the clergy shorn of its undue privileges; primogeniture abolished; and the great principle of "*Igualidad ante la Ley*," Equality before the Law, boldly promulgated. They feared the spread of the spirit of liberalism, which had worked these marvellous changes at home. Nor were their fears unfounded. In spite of distance, in spite of ages of depression, although ignorance and superstition held almost absolute sway in the Spanish colonies, rays of the new light reached America, and men were found who began to talk boldly of human rights, and to hint at their future recognition. The voice of Freedom, grateful to the rudest ear, had its thousands of listeners. It fell upon the depressed people like strains of music upon the savage, in a whirl of exciting and pleasurable emotions. Vague hopes of an unknown future, shone out upon the clouds which enveloped them. The more enlightened enthusiasts dreamed of a Utopia about to be realized; the Creole, of a new order of things, in which he should stand equal with the highest; the Indian of the return of those traditional, glorious days, when the democracy of Tlascalla, like that of Sparta, had its simple but severe laws, wisely adapted to its own wants and condition, and

when their fathers wore no hated foreign yoke; but few, if any, entertained any clear idea of what constituted true Republicanism, or comprehended the processes by which its enjoyment might be attained and secured. The best, not to say the wisest among them, like the revolutionists of France, fell into the error of supposing that a people weary of tyranny, and enthusiastic for freedom, were of necessity able to comprehend its requirements, and fulfill its conditions, while they enjoyed its latitudes. Republics are of slow growth; they are, to a certain extent, the results of that high development of humanity which they are, in turn, adapted to perfect. While then the more abstract truths of Republicanism were promulgated with eloquence and force, the means for the attainment of rational freedom were lost sight of, or but imperfectly recognized. Separation from Spain was the first, grand, practical object kept in view; this accomplished, it was deemed all else that was needful or desirable would follow.

It has been a subject of remark, with many perhaps of surprise, that the dismemberment of the Spanish empire, and the independence of its American colonies, were so easily accomplished. That it was, in great part, due to the weakness of the mother country, is indisputable. But there were other causes favoring that result, to which we shall briefly allude.

The aristocratic portion of the Spanish American population, by which is meant not only those who held places or derived importance from their connection with the government, but those also whose principles were monarchical and exclusive in their tendency, including the vast body of the richly endowed priesthood, were not only astonished at the spread of liberal principles at home, but feared that the sweeping reforms there effected would extend to America, and reach their own body. They trembled for their prescriptions and privileges. But self-confident and presumptuous, claiming to possess the education, and most certainly

possessing the wealth of the colonies, and the power which it confers, they saw with less alarm the development and promulgation of liberal ideas in America. And when the cry of "*Separation from Spain*" was raised, they caught it from the lips of the people, and made it almost unanimous. In this separation they saw not only their present security, but the perpetuation of their cherished powers and privileges. The Viceroy hoped, from the reflex and representative of an emperor, to become himself a king, to shine with original not borrowed lustre; and the aristocracy to rise from a colonial dependency to a national rank and independence. They looked forward to the establishment of a political and priestly oligarchy, which should dominate over the ignorant masses, with more than their present powers and distinctions. Thus the absolutism, the old intolerances, the prejudices, and corruptions of Spain, born of priestcraft and tyranny, took refuge in America, and made their final stand against the progress of liberal sentiments. The heterogeneous union thus effected, for the accomplishment of the single object of separation from Spain, was successful. Except in Mexico and Colombia, and some of the seaport strongholds of South America, this result was achieved with scarce a struggle. Spain confided in her colonial officers to maintain the integrity of the empire; and when these failed her, she knew too well her own weakness to prolong a contest, which our own revolution had shown her must be hopeless. Nowhere was the separation effected with greater unanimity, and more easily, than in Central America; and to that country do we more particularly refer, in the pages which follow.

But no sooner was the separation effected, hardly had the mutual congratulations upon that result been exchanged, when the people called, in a voice of thunder, for absolute independence, on the basis, so far as they could comprehend it, of the great Republic of the North.

And now commenced that deadly, uncompromising strug-

gle between the two grand antagonistic principles which we have indicated; represented, on one side, by a rich and powerful aristocracy, and a jealous and beneficed clergy, and on the other, by the people, sensible of their abstract rights, rich only in their devotion, but enthusiastically attached to what they understood to be Liberty and Republicanism; between, in short, what in Mexico and Central America have been called the *Serviles* and *Liberals*;—names which we shall henceforth use, for the sake of easy distinction. From a struggle for supremacy, it is easy to perceive, how this contest became one of extermination; for there can be no compromise, no fusion, between principles so implacably hostile as those which now divided the Spanish American colonies. Hence has resulted, in great part, that fierce intolerance which I have pointed out and deplored at the commencement of this chapter; and hence that series of revolutions and counter-revolutions, which have hitherto distracted the Spanish American States, and in which the great mass of our people see only the rivalship of petty chieftains, and partisan struggles for ascendancy.

Our own revolution was little beyond a contest for the form of Republicanism; its substantial advantages had already been won slowly and in detail, the fruits of a series of popular advances, commencing at Runymede, where the barons broke the sceptre of absolutism, and practically triumphing under the commonwealth, when Cromwell struck down with iron glaive both king and barons. The deadly encounters between the two principles, which, with us, ran through a period of centuries, in the Spanish American States have been concentrated within the shorter period of years. The revolution is still going on; the rights of man are not yet fully vindicated; the triumph of Republicanism not yet attained; the downfall of Servilism not yet complete. It is most true the efforts of the Liberals have not always been wisely directed, and that by falling into the excesses of

their opponents, they have retarded and imperilled their own success. It is not less true that they had to operate more upon the feelings, and less upon the judgment of the people, than the leaders in our own emancipation; and in the frenzy of excitement, have been forced into the commission of deeds disgraceful to their cause, and which they were the first to deplore. But the odium of the bloodiest and most revolting features of the contest belongs not to them. The whole course of the Serviles has been marked by atrocity. They have shown neither tolerance, generosity, nor mercy; and have given a cast of brutality and barbarism to every struggle in which they have been engaged.

It is not my purpose to go into a detailed, political history of Central America, since the separation from Spain, much less of Mexico and the other States, in all of which might be traced the development and working of the principles and causes which I have pointed out. We have to deal only with generalities. It is, perhaps, enough, in the way of illustration, to refer to the success of the Serviles in Mexico, in the establishment of an ephemeral empire, under Iturbide. Their triumph, however, was brief; and with the fall of that short-lived empire, monarchy disappeared forever from the North American Continent.

CHAPTER II.

THE REVOLUTION IN CENTRAL AMERICA—STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE REPUBLICANS AND MONARCHISTS—TRIUMPH OF THE REPUBLIC. 1821–1823.

In no part of Spanish America were the abuses of Spain and the tyranny of her colonial system more conspicuous than in Central America, while it constituted the Captain-Generalcy or Kingdom of Guatemala. Her jealous colonial policy precluded the people of that wide region from any communication or relationship with the world at large. Foreigners were rigidly excluded from its shores, nor was emigration thither from Spain itself permitted, except under severe restrictions. The power of the mother country was systematically magnified, and the dependence and impotence of the colonies sedulously inculcated. The officers of the crown were allowed the largest prerogatives, and invested with almost unlimited powers, which were often used for the promotion of individual objects, and for purposes of personal aggrandizement. They had neither interests or sympathies in common with the people at large. With them was leagued a priesthood, rich, and wielding the powers of that terrible instrument of oppression, the Inquisition. Conjointly they were absolute and irresistible. The conquered aborigines became the passive slaves of their will, cultivating their estates without pay, and sustaining taxes from which the ruling classes were exempted. They were not permitted to ride their own mules or horses; and the stocks and the whipping-

post were the penalties for daring to stand covered in the presence of their despoilers!

I have already recited some of the causes which led to the overthrow of this order of things. As early as 1815 the first open expressions of discontent were manifested in Leon de Nicaragua. To that city belongs the glory of having given the first impulse to liberal sentiments in Central America. Although the movement was suppressed, yet it had the effect to arouse the popular mind, and direct the thoughts of men into the revolutionary channel, at the same time that it convinced the officers of the Government that an early and effectual separation from Spain was inevitable. The line of policy which they adopted, I have already indicated. True to their instincts, they sought to direct the gathering elements to their own advantage, and offered no effectual opposition to the preliminary arrangements for independence.

These arrangements were completed on the 15th of September, 1821, when the people of the city of Guatemala, and the representatives of the people at large, assembled in the Palace of the Audiencia, and proclaimed the independence of the country. The change was bloodless but decisive. Those who, from sympathy or position, were too closely identified with Spain, to join either in the Republican sentiment, or in the designs of those who sought independence as the means of securing supreme power in their own hands, quietly left the country, and retired unmolested to Cuba or Spain. The Serviles and the Liberals alone remained, and from that period dates the commencement of the unrelenting, and as yet undetermined contest, between the great antagonistic principles of which they are respectively the representatives.

It is not to be doubted, indeed, it is capable of proof, that the Serviles of Central America originally contemplated the establishment of an independent Kingdom or Monarchy, which should comprise the provinces belonging to the ancient Kingdom of Guatemala. But the Provisional Junta which

was convened immediately after the separation, showed a large majority of Liberals, who, in spite of the efforts of the astonished and almost paralyzed Serviles, proceeded to administer the oath of *absolute independence*, and to convoke a national Constituent Assembly which should organize the country on the basis of Republican Institutions. The Serviles were now suddenly and painfully aroused from their self-confident dreams; they found themselves in an impotent numerical minority; the people, which they had despised and expected easily to control, had come boldly forward and claimed their rights. In the meeting of the National Assembly and the proclamation of the Republic, they foresaw the destruction of their cherished hopes, and the loss not only of the new privileges and powers which they had hoped to gain from the separation, but of all that they had ever possessed. Under these circumstances they witnessed with anxious envy the establishment of an empire in Mexico; and, distrusting their own strength to resist the popular will, determined to forego a portion of their hopes, to secure the realization of the remainder. They sought the incorporation of Central America in the Mexican Empire, and demanded the assistance of the now triumphant Serviles of that country for the accomplishment of that object. The proposition flattered the vanity of Iturbide, the so-called emperor, and titles and decorations were asked and promised in anticipation of its success. Assured of this support, they took new courage, and with desperate zeal endeavored to turn the tide of popular feeling.

The Constituent Assembly, pursuant to the convocation of the Provisional Junta, nevertheless met in Guatemala, the richest and most populous city of the country, but unfortunately, from having been the seat of the viceregal court, the only city really devoted to the Servile interest. It was, in fact, and still is, the centre of Servilism; where all its plans are organized, and whence all its operations are directed.

The Assembly, notwithstanding all the efforts of the conspirators, who with pompous promises and golden dreams of opulence and felicity under the empire, had endeavored to seduce the ignorant and mercenary portion of the people into the support of their plans, and with partial success,—the Assembly, to their mortification and chagrin, showed a large majority of Liberals in its constitution. An attempt to corrupt this majority, signally failed; and then was made the first direct and open attack upon the popular party,—the initiative violence in that long series which has since distracted that devoted country, and brought it to the brink of utter ruin. The hall of the Constituent Assembly was blockaded by armed bands, and its deliberations forcibly suspended. A number of the most distinguished members among the Liberals were assassinated, and by treason, violence, and blood, Servilism gained its first triumph in Guatemala.

The people of Central America were scattered thinly over a wide country, and from their diffusion prevented from concentrating in support of their representatives. It was weeks after these events, while anxiously awaiting the promulgation of a Republican charter, that the unsuspecting people were startled by the proclamation of the Serviles, proposing the adhesion of the country to the Mexican Empire! Men stood aghast. Their leaders had fallen, or were incarcerated in the dungeons of Guatemala; and to crown their distress, treason stalked into their own ranks. Gainza, a weak but popular man, who had presided over the Provisional Junta, seduced by the promises of the Serviles, and delirious with the prospect of a brilliant advancement in the empire as the reward of his treachery, had joined the triumphant faction.

Stimulated by gold, confused bands of men now paraded the streets of Guatemala and the adjacent towns, invoking death on the leaders of the Liberal party, and demanding the proscription of all who adhered to them. They invaded the

houses of the Republicans, and added murder to robbery and pillage. But to give an appearance of formality to the meditated outrage, a spurious convocation was held, at the head of which, with practical irony, was placed the traitor Gainza. This convocation affected to submit the question of incorporation with the Mexican empire, *not* to the people, but to the decision of the municipalities and the army! The day was fixed for the trial, too early, however, to permit of returns to be received from any except the immediate dependencies of Guatemala. The army, reörganized by the usurpers, and made up of their instruments, stood ready to second and enforce their wishes. Few had the courage to oppose these proceedings, and they did so at the peril of their lives; and, as was to be anticipated, by the votes of a mercenary army, and of the alarmed and trembling municipalities, fraudulently computed, it was declared that the question of aggregation to the Mexican Empire was carried, and a decree to that effect was at once issued. A force, previously solicited from Mexico, was already on its march, under the command of Gen. Filisola, to effect, by foreign bayonets, the consummation of the treason thus successfully commenced.

As we have said, these movements of the Serviles were for a considerable period scarcely known beyond the immediate vicinity of Guatemala, and were unsustained by the people at large. No sooner did the people recover from their astonishment, than they set themselves to work to oppose the attempted usurpation. San Salvador, the nearest province to Guatemala, and the centre of Liberalism, was the first to hear of the events which we have recorded, and the first to adopt measures of resistance. The oligarchists felt their insecurity, and hastily despatched a force to check the demonstrations in San Salvador. The sturdy republicans of that little province as hastily took the field, and the Servile army, notwithstanding its superior numbers, was met and beaten. For the first time, but unfortunately not the last, the repre-

sentatives of the two great antagonistic principles, which we have undertaken to define, met on the battle field. The soil of Central America is drenched in blood, its energies are almost exhausted, and the end is not yet!

The patriots of San Salvador were seconded by the people of the flourishing cities of Granada in Nicaragua, and San Jose in Costa Rica. Leon, the capital of Nicaragua, however, became the scene of a severe struggle. The Bishop of the province had, from the beginning, opposed the popular movement, and now openly advocated the designs of the Serviles. The power of the Church had not yet been broken, and he was supported, not only by the aristocratic faction, but also by many whose bigotry overruled their judgment, or who were blind followers of the priesthood. This controversy led, subsequently, to scenes the most terrible, and ended in the almost entire devastation of the city—which, in its fall, permanently prostrated the Servile faction in Nicaragua.

The triumph of the Liberals in San Salvador, would have been fatal to the Serviles, and might have secured their downfall for ever. But almost simultaneously with the arrival in Guatemala of the news of their overthrow, the imperial forces of Iturbide reached that city. With renewed confidence, the Serviles rallied their despairing army, and the fratricides of Guatemala marched in company with troops of the empire, upon the victorious Liberals. Suffice it to say, after a long and bloody campaign, the forces of San Salvador were broken up, and her submission completed.

With this campaign commenced those atrocities, which, through retaliation and otherwise, have given to Central American warfare a character of savage barbarity, almost unprecedented in history. The mercenaries of Mexico acknowledged no restraint. They despised the soldiery with which they were associated, and when not in active duty, spread terror wherever they were quartered, alike amongst

friends and foes. The vilest outrages, rape, robbery, and murder, were of daily occurrence. Drunken soldiers swarmed the streets and public places of the towns and cities, and wantonly attacked and wounded, often slew, the first they encountered. The black flag of the empire was everywhere the signal for rapine; and blood and murder was the synonym of "Viva el Emperador!" The public treasury was exhausted, the rich robbed, and the public charities confiscated to support the foreign and mercenary forces; and the people, no longer enjoying the protection of law, and everywhere the victims of a brutal soldiery, were driven to defend their individual rights, and to revenge themselves in detail upon their oppressors,—thus aggravating the horrors of disorder and anarchy. The public demoralization was complete; and such was the second triumph of Servilism!

On the 5th of January, 1822, the Mexican Government had been proclaimed in Guatemala. And while the events which we have related were transpiring, Iturbide, by a decree, dated the 4th of November of the same year, decreed the division of the country into three Captain-Generalcies, viz: Chiapas, with its capital at Ciudad Real; Sacatapequez, with its capital at Guatemala; and Nicaragua, with its capital at Leon. In all, the officers were appointed from amongst the members of the Servile faction. Practically, however, no power was ever exercised under this attempted organization. San Salvador, though beaten in the field, was not conquered. Its Provisional Congress, notwithstanding that it was driven from place to place, remained intact, and defied the invaders of the province.

It was under these circumstances, and as a means of retaining its freedom, that this Congress resolved upon a step expressive of sympathies and sentiments, which still exist, vigorous and unchanged. It resolved upon annexation to the United States; and by a solemn act, on the 2d of December, 1822, decreed its incorporation with that Republic, whose

example sustained it in its adversity, and to which it naturally looked, "as the head of the great Republican family." It is not known that any action was taken upon this proposition, by the American Government. Fortunately, the triumph of Servilism was of short duration, and the immediate necessity for such action was obviated; for, in the midst of these events, came the startling news of the downfall of the empire of Iturbide, before the well-directed energies of the Liberals of Mexico. The forces of Filisola were at once disbanded, and the Serviles again thrown upon their own resources. Without exterior aid they were unable to sustain themselves for a moment, and they at once abandoned all opposition to the Republicans, who everywhere assumed the direction of affairs. Chiapas, partly from inclination, and partly from force of circumstances, chose to share its destinies with Mexico; but the remaining States, Nicaragua, Guatemala, San Salvador, Honduras, and Costa Rica, at once united in sending delegates to a Constituent Assembly, for the purpose of organizing the country upon a republican basis. The Serviles did not venture to oppose the meeting of this Assembly, but sought to bend it to their purposes. To this end they exerted their utmost skill and energy. They aimed to establish a practical dictatorship, which should some day, by an easy transition, resolve itself into their cherished form of a monarchy.

The deliberations of the Assembly terminated in the adoption of the Constitution of 1824. This, however, was contested, chapter by chapter, and section by section, but vigorously and triumphantly sustained by the Liberals. The guaranties of individual rights, the representative principle, *habeas corpus*, and the liberty of the press, were tacitly concurred in by the Serviles, because they feared to oppose them. But they were the first to be assailed and overthrown, when that party subsequently attained the ascendancy. The plan of federation contained in the new Constitution met with

their most determined hostility; and, looking to centralization, they as vehemently opposed the recognition of the local and internal powers, and qualified sovereignty of the several states. In this they were sustained by many of the Liberals themselves, who thought these provisions were not adapted to the present wants of the country.

The acts of this Assembly, apart from the promulgation of the Constitution, were of the most liberal and enlightened character. In the sweeping reforms which they were designed to effect, they remind us forcibly of the doings of the Republican Conventions of France. All titles and privileges of nobility were abolished, including the title of Don; the sale of Papal bulls was prohibited; all obstacles to emigration removed; the widest guarantees of security to foreigners and their property conceded; and finally the Republic was decreed under the name of "THE REPUBLIC OF CENTRAL AMERICA," with a national flag, having, for its armorial devices, five volcanoes, and bearing the motto, "Dios, Union, Libertad,"—God, Union, Liberty!

Amongst the acts of this Assembly, there is one which deserves more than a mere passing mention. By a decree of the 17th of April, 1824, it abolished slavery absolutely and at once, and provided against its reëstablishment, at any time, or in any part of the Republic. The Slave Trade was declared to be piracy, and the heaviest punishments were decreed against all persons who should engage in it, directly or indirectly. To Central America, therefore, belongs the glory of having been the first country in the world to abolish Negro Slavery. And, to the policy marked out by its first Constituent Assembly, it has ever and faithfully adhered. It was the adoption of this measure which led to its first dispute with Great Britain—that loud-mouthed advocate of philanthropy, when philanthropy is profitable, and never otherwise. Will it be credited that, as late as 1840, a claim, enforced by vessels of war, was made against Central America

by the British Government for slaves who had fled from Belize, and secured their freedom under the Constitution of Central America? Yet such is the fact—the black, damning fact![1]

The Constitution published on the 27th of December, 1823, was not decreed until the 22d of November, 1824. With its adoption, the Serviles seem for a while to have abandoned their unpatriotic opposition and insane designs. The enthusiasm of the people was at its height, and to oppose it was madness. In spite of many radical defects, and of many formidable assaults, this Constitution lasted for a whole decade, and exercised a most beneficial influence upon the country. Had the people at large possessed that general intelligence which prevailed amongst our own people, at the time they effected their independence, and which, while it gave them a clear insight into their own wants and requirements, preserved them from the arts and sophistry of demagogues and designing men,—then, no doubt, it would have been reformed and perpetuated, and given peace, happiness, and prosperity to the country. "Even as it was," observes a

[1] Upon this point we have the distinct testimony of a British subject, himself at that time a resident in Belize. He says: "As late as 1840, a claim was made by the British Government for the return to slavery of some Africans who had restored themselves to liberty by withdrawing from British Honduras, and settling under the protection of the Republic. The claim was moved by the British Consul General (Chatfield), and seconded by British officers, both military and civil, who were sent to Guatemala, to demand the persons of these poor Africans, and supported by the presence of a British vessel of war upon their coasts. But though the Government of the Republic was then weak and dismembered, there was moral rectitude and dignity enough in it to spurn the demand of a Government to which, on other matters, it had so long been accustomed to yield. In their reply they declared that no slaves were or could be recognized in their territories, the inviolability of which they asserted, although conscious of their lack of physical power to maintain it against such a foe."—*Gospel in Central America.*—p. 122.

Central American writer, "no one, whatever his prejudices, could fail to perceive the advance in the manners and customs, and the change in the spirit of the people of Central America, during the ten years of freedom of the press which this Constitution secured."

CHAPTER III.

THE REPUBLIC IN OPERATION—DEVOTION OF ITS SUPPORTERS—COMBINATION OF ITS ENEMIES—CIVIL WAR.
(1823—1828.)

SOMETIME previous to the adoption of the National Constitution, the people of San Salvador met in convention, and framed a State Constitution. It was decreed June 12, 1824, and a local government installed in conformity with its provisions. San Salvador, foremost in every liberal movement, was followed in succession by Costa Rica, January 2, Guatemala, October 11, Honduras, December 11, 1825, and Nicaragua, April 8, 1826. On the 6th of February, 1825, the Federal Representatives assembled in the city of Guatemala. They numbered thirty-four members, apportioned as follows:—Guatemala seventeen; San Salvador nine; Honduras six; Nicaragua six; and Costa Rica two. General Arce, distinguished more for his hostility to the Spanish rule than for his abilities or qualifications for the office, was elected President, and installed in office on the 29th of April following. In the same month, a Federal Senate, consisting, as in our own country, of two members from each state, also convened in Guatemala, and was organized by Mariano Beltraneno, Vice President of the Republic, and, in virtue of that office, President of the Senate.[1]

[1] At this time a Supreme Court of Appeals was established in Guatemala; Dr. T. A. Oberon, being the first President. All the States also appointed State Courts in place of the old Spanish tribunals, but the laws and customs, and most of the offices pertaining to the old courts were perpetuated.

The Republic was now fairly started. For a time affairs moved on smoothly; and the country, enjoying peace and quiet, made rapid strides in a career of improvement and prosperity. But the Serviles, though defeated, were not destroyed, and were active in sowing the seeds of discontent, wherever an opportunity was afforded them of exciting the prejudices or the jealousies of the people. In the city of Leon, as we have seen, the bishop, seconded by the bigots of the Church and the aristocratic faction, had strenuously opposed every movement towards a republic. His strength was principally concentrated in the city, although even there he was not in a numerical majority. Yet his adherents possessed most of the wealth of the place, which appeared to be controlled by them. This fact rendered Leon obnoxious to the liberal towns of the state, and originated a feeling of jealousy, which is not yet wholly eradicated. Every movement in that city was looked upon with suspicion. When, therefore, after some months of quiet, while the administration of affairs was still in the hands of the Provisional Government, the mob, incited by the bishop or his rash friends, exacted the removal of Basilio Carillo from the chief command, the event created a profound sensation throughout the state. Elated by their success, the anti-liberals followed up this violence by other similar demands. A reaction followed, and a counter-movement was made in the city itself, which was soon plunged into all the horrors of a civil war. The conflict was carried on with terrible energy, and without mercy upon either side. Ward was arrayed against ward, street against street, neighbor against neighbor, brother against brother, and father against son. The contest spread to the neighboring towns; partisans upon both sides took up arms, and rallied to the support of their respective friends in the capital. Here the contest was prolonged, with various successes, for one hundred and fourteen days. During this time a great part of the city, including

its best built and richest portion, was destroyed; a thousand dwellings, it is said, were given to the flames in a single night. Leon was reduced to a ruin; yet both parties maintained their ground with an obstinacy rarely paralleled in history. How long the contest would have been continued, it is impossible to say, had not General Arce entered the State, at the head of a body of Federal troops from San Salvador. This intervention restored peace; the Serviles and their adherents submitted to the overwhelming liberal sentiment of the Republic, and a treacherous calm rested for a while upon the surface of affairs.

The Liberal leaders, generally men of good education and lofty and patriotic aims, whose principal error was an undue confidence in the popular impulse (not to say judgment), in reviewing the struggle through which they had passed, failed not to discover that ignorance and priestcraft were the grand obstacles to the prosperity of the country—its foes, and the disturbers of its peace. The Church had arrayed itself openly on the side of the monarchical faction, and identified itself with those who had manifested their determination to ruin if they could not rule. But while that Church had no hold upon the Liberal leaders, who despised its dogmas and laughed at its forms, it still wielded a strong influence over the uneducated masses. Policy, therefore, forbade a direct and open warfare upon it, on the part of the Liberals. But rightly comprehending that general education is irreconcilable with popular superstition, and its most effective opponent, they directed their utmost endeavors to the diffusion of knowledge. The Lancasterian system of education had then been newly introduced in the United States and Europe. Schools upon this plan were hastily established in many of the towns; but they were inadequate to meet the public requirements. The people were enthusiastic to learn—means of education were everywhere demanded, but teachers were not to be found. In this emergency, the officers of the

government vindicated the principles which they professed, by volunteering their services, as teachers, in the intervals of their official duties. "The very barracks were converted into class rooms, and the barefooted Indian soldiers were instructed in the rudiments of knowledge by their officers." Never, before or since, has the world witnessed a more earnest devotion to the public good than was displayed by the Liberals during this period of their ascendancy, and until the hydra of Servilism again reared its crushed but unsevered heads.

In San Salvador, however, the people, better educated and more radical in their sentiments than in the other states, could not brook this slow process of undermining the fabric of the Church. Indignant at some assumptions of power on the part of the archbishop, who resided in Guatemala, and who was conspicuous for his reactionary sentiments, they asserted the broad principle that the people have the right to choose their religious as well as their civil leaders; and, acting accordingly, elected a Liberal priest, one of their own citizens, Dr. Delegado, Bishop of the State. The archbishop denounced the act, and the Pope himself, regarding it as an infringement on his prerogatives, not only disapproved of it, but demanded its revocation, under threats of excommunication against the entire people of the State. But the threat was received with cool defiance; and shortly after Costa Rica followed the example of San Salvador, in like disregard of the successor of St. Peter. These proceedings, to say the least, were impolitic, and tended to precipitate collisions, which, by disturbing the educational system, prolonged, if they did not strengthen, the power and influence of the Church, and saved it from the fate to which it was doomed by the slow but sure process of educational reform.

We now come to events which history sorrows to record. Five years had elapsed since the successful blow for independence had been struck. The attempt to establish a new

monarchy, or aristocratic oligarchy, had signally failed, and a liberal and truly republican government had been established, which had devoted itself to the amelioration of the country, with energy and success. With the exception of the disturbance in Leon, which was rather a local feud than a formal assault upon the new order of things, and a feeble attempt to revive the Spanish authority in Costa Rica, no open opposition had been made to the Republic. But while peaceful on the surface, the elements of discord were actively at work below. The same broad distinctions of party still existed, but the opposition had formed new and dangerous combinations. Ardent aspirations for independence had, at first, borne down and overcome many deeply seated prejudices in the minds of the populace, which reasserted their sway, to a greater or less extent, when the object of these aspirations had been attained, and their enthusiasm become cooled. Such must always be the case when men are controlled more by impulse and feelings than by reason and reflection. The reactionary leaders were not slow to avail themselves of this circumstance, and succeeded in planting, in the minds of many of the people, the seeds of dissatisfaction with the very results which they themselves had aided to bring about.[1]

[1] The composition of the two parties, at this time, is well presented by an English author, to whose generally correct and impartial observations I have already frequently had occasion to allude.

"The Liberal party included some few who had been distinguished men under the monarchy, the greater portion of the legal and medical professions, or, in other words, the élite of the university, who had preferred those studies to that of theology or canons; not so much as a means of support, as because they were almost the only careers open to those who rejected the ecclesiastical vocation. It also numbered many merchants and landed proprietors, supported by a numerous body composed of the more intelligent artizans and laborers. Their leaders were men of very decided democratical principles, of unquestionable ability, and, considering the school they were brought up in, and the influences that surrounded

The Serviles consisted of heterogeneous classes, having nothing in common, except their hatred of the Liberals. The nucleus of this organization were the *soi-disant* nobility, the spawn of the vice-regal courts, whose tendencies, in common with those of the beneficed clergy, with whom they were associated, were "to oppose the education of the masses, to centralize and consolidate the civil power in the hands of the few,"—in short, to establish any order of things which should secure their own complete predominance. To this combination, the aristocrats, called "Sangres Azules," *blue bloods*, brought proficiency in intrigue, no insignificant degree of

them, they manifested no small amount of true patriotism and devotedness to their convictions; though, alas! in too many instances, stained with venality, and even with deeds of oppression and of blood. What they overthrew, and what they accomplished for the State, is honorable alike to their talents and to their sentiments; and though the limits of a sketch will scarcely admit of the due appreciation of it, a cursory view of their achievements, taking into consideration the circumstances of the people and of the times, will probably excite more wonder, and certainly secure for them higher praise, than the victories of Alvarado."—*Gospel in Central America*, p. 124.

"The Serviles, including the two extremes of society, the most refined and the most barbarous, linked together by their blind guides—the priests—were entirely led by the latter; among whom were many ignorant Spaniards, and some few men of ability, though, in this particular, they were far inferior to the Liberals. They, however, proved themselves to be thoroughly imbued with the spirit of their order and the genius of their system. They have ever acted upon the maxim that all things were lawful which seemed to them expedient; and, notwithstanding their apparent unity, they too had their divisions, their mutual jealousies, their private ambitions, and their individual immoralities; which, together with their common rapacity, were favorable to their opponents. And in general, if not universally, it will be found easy to trace to their intrigues the internal disorders of the social and political body, in each of the several states composing the republic; and not a few of the past civil wars, and existing animosities between State and State, are also attributable to their influence as a class, or to the personal ambition and seditious conduct of individuals in it."—*Ibid.* p. 126.

ability, considerable wealth, and the influences with which wealth is associated. The priesthood brought not only wealth, a widely extended machinery, capable of being rapidly and effectively wielded, but also, what was of more importance, numbers—adherents amongst the very people against whom they conspired, blind instruments of their will, whose concurrence was secured by traditional reverence for the Church, by deeply seated bigotry, and whose ignorance rendered them the easy victims of every artful appeal, especially when made by men to whom they were accustomed to look as leaders. Containing such elements, with an ignorant and excitable people, unacquainted with their duties, and without a clear knowledge of their prospective or immediate requirements, on the one hand, and a large and powerful faction, deadly hostile to every form of Republicanism, on the other, it was impossible for the Republic to remain in peace. In vain did the enlightened leaders of the liberal party labor to sustain public order. Their ancient foes sowed wide and deep the seeds of local discord, and by all possible means endeavored, but too successfully, to bring the Federal and State Governments in conflict.

In this they were greatly assisted by some radical defects in the Constitution itself; which, in common perhaps with our own charter, had not defined with sufficient exactness the respective powers of the State and General Governments. Upon this point the Liberals themselves were divided, some favoring a large centralization of power in the General Government, and others believing that the legitimate object of a federation is simply to effect what the States individually are incapable of accomplishing, and nothing more. These differences, it will be seen in the sequel, were not without their influence in weakening the Liberal strength, and precipitating the destruction of the Republic![1]

[1] There were also, some collateral questions started, which, if not directly, certainly indirectly, contributed to the same result. Upon every

With this necessary preliminary exposition, we proceed in our narration of events. From the first the Liberal cause was doomed to suffer from treachery. The Serviles had the social position and the wealth to tempt the ambition and purchase the concurrence, as well as the tact to flatter the vanity, of all those in position, who were open to such appeals. To propitiate, and imperceptibly to mould and direct, when they cannot crush, has been their uniform, and too often successful, policy. Gen. Arce, the President of the Republic, was the first victim of their arts. "Under the pretext of having secret information that the State authorities of Guatemala were plotting rebellion against the Federal Government, he was induced to arrest the citizen Chief or Governor of the State, José Francisco Barrundia, one of the most

subject of national policy which came up, the Serviles, very naturally, took such a course as should most effectually tend to distract and embarrass their opponents, without any regard to the principles of right or expediency which they might involve. The Constitution of the Republic, as we have already seen, not only liberated all the slaves in the country, but guarantied freedom to all who should enter its borders. It was not long before numbers of slaves from the British settlements at Belize fled within the territories of the Republic, and sought the protection of its laws. They were reclaimed, and their surrender peremptorily demanded, but by the Congress as peremptorily refused. The Serviles, in a body, advocated the surrender, and sided with the English in the proposed violation of the Constitution, and of the laws of humanity. From that moment the reactionists were favored, not only by the British merchants and political agents resident in the country, but also aided and abetted by the authorities at Belize, who undoubtedly reflected the disposition of the British cabinet. The Serviles, when they attained to power, surrendered the slaves, and have ever since been identified with the British interests and schemes—even to the extent of vindicating the British territorial aggressions on their sister States! This relationship, at this moment, keeps the Servile minority—a small numerical minority—in power in Guatemala, and controls the whole policy of that dictatorship, called, with severe irony, "The Republic of Guatemala."

able and active reformers in the country, while in the discharge of his official functions, in the House of the Government, and at once proceeded to disarm the civic militia." This outrage upon State sovereignty, to which no resistance was opposed, took place on the 6th of September, 1826, and from that period may be dated the terrible commotions to which the country was afterwards subjected. It was an arbitrary exercise of power, unwarranted by circumstances, in flagrant violation of the Constitution, and has consigned its perpetrators to eternal infamy.

The Serviles were not slow in following up their success. The citizen Cerilio Flores, a man high in public esteem, was Vice Chief, or Lieutenant Governor, of Guatemala. At the date of this event, he was in the district of Quesaltenango, engaged in the discharge of his official duties. The inhabitants of this district were chiefly Indians, ignorant, and under the unqualified control of the priests. When the news of the arrest of the Governor reached there, a friar ascended the pulpit, in the principal town, on a market-day, and by his harangue so infuriated the populace against Flores, that they started in pursuit of him, and although he sought sanctuary in the church, they followed him thither, and slaughtered him at the very foot of the altar, literally rending his body in pieces, amidst cries of "Long live Guatemala! Death to the Republic!" The proximate cause of the vindictive hostility of the monks, was the fact that, in the general levy of taxes for state purposes, the property of the convents had not been exempted! And thus was the movement, started by the aristocrats, seconded by their allies, the priests!

The violence exercised against the principal civil officers of Guatemala, was continued against all the inferior members of the Government, many of whom were imprisoned or assassinated, and the remainder compelled to seek safety in flight. The Liberals, taken by surprise, were at first unable to offer any resistance to these outrages. A number, never-

theless, hastily got together, and under the lead of Col. Pierson, a West Indian Creole, reduced the murderers of Flores in Quesaltenango; but, before they were able to unite their forces, for the rescue of Guatemala, were themselves attacked and dispersed, by troops ordered against them by the treacherous Arce. Under these auspices a new State Government was organized, consisting, it is needless to say, exclusively of the Serviles, and those in their interest. Don Mariano Aycinena, who had borne the title of Marquis under Spain, was made nominally chief, but practically dictator; and with his administration, came in that detestable system of political espionage and proscription, which has given such a bloody and barbarous cast to the political revolutions of the country. A political inquisition was established, for summarily disposing of all persons guilty of entertaining opinions differing from those of the usurpers! Its sessions were secret, and its decrees fell upon the astonished public with fearful rapidity. Men were condemned without hearing. To entertain liberal opinions, and possess ability, were enough to bring them under the ban of proscription, and consign them to prison and to death. The Liberal leaders were all outlawed, and Col. Pierson, one of the ablest of that party, who had returned to Guatemala, under promises of protection, was treacherously shot, beneath the walls of the cemetery!. Terrorism and Servilism went hand in hand.[1]

Arce followed up his treason to the Republic, by convoking, on his own authority, a meeting of the General Congress; but the events which we have related caused so general and profound an excitement, that no meeting took place. The acknowledged object of this convocation, was to annul the Constitution, and organize a central authority, or dictatorship,

[1] Aycinena affected the utmost piety, and previous to signing the warrant of execution against Pierson, confessed himself and took the sacrament. Fit preparation for an act of treachery and murder!

which should at once blot out State independence. This was always a favorite project with the Servile party; which, throughout the country, emboldened by the successes of their friends in Guatemala, now created disturbances in Honduras and Nicaragua, and involved those states in civil war. San Salvador, true to the Republic, presented an undivided front. It repudiated the authority of Arce; and, in the heat of the moment, an insufficient detachment of troops marched upon the usurpers in Guatemala. They were met by such of the Federal troops as adhered to the President, and a body of Servile soldiery, and driven back. Being in turn attacked, they repulsed their enemies in the most decisive manner, and fully sustained the position of the State. Close upon these events, Arce endeavored to pursue in Honduras the same policy of subverting the State Government, which had been so easily effected in Guatemala, but failed in the attempt. He was repelled: and, having partially suppressed the Servile insurrections within its own limits, Honduras now united its forces with those of San Salvador. Nicaragua did the same. The detail of the insurrectionary struggles in the States, would be neither interesting nor profitable. Enough to say that they were bloody, and marked by those cruel and unrelenting features which distinguish civil wars above all others, and make them most to be dreaded.

The month of September, 1827, found the nominal head of the Republic wielding the forms of government, but sustained only by a portion of the Federal soldiery, and the Serviles of Guatemala; who, through terrorism, now held uncontrolled sway in that city, and of whom, in fact, Arce was himself only the instrument. The support which he and his Servile friends received in the other states, consisted only of local insurrections against the state authorities, undertaken without concert, and unproductive of any permanent impression. Upon the other hand, San Salvador unanimously, and Nicaragua and Honduras by large majorities,

were in open opposition to the men who had betrayed and subverted the Republic, and yet affected to be its representatives, but who were in reality only the masks of Servilism, and used to give a semblance of legality to treason. Costa Rica, separated by mountain wastes from the rest of the Confederacy, and insignificent in power, remained a passive and astonished spectator of these proceedings, without taking any part in the quarrel.

Between these two grand divisions, or parties, a desperate struggle now ensued; a struggle which was really but a prolongation of that which immediately succeeded the independence, for the same objects, but in which the Serviles had succeeded in introducing some new elements favorable to their views. Upon the 28th of September, the so-called Federal Army defeated the united forces of San Salvador and Honduras, at a place called Sabina Grande. But their triumph was brief. They were shortly after attacked in turn by a body of men from San Salvador and Nicaragua, and totally routed.

This battle was the most important, in many respects, of any which had been fought in the country. Not in the immediate results of the victory to the Liberals, but because it brought forward a man, henceforth not only to become the beloved leader of the Liberal party, but the most conspicuous man of the country. That man was FRANCISCO MORAZAN, to whose energy and skill, although a subordinate officer, that victory was mainly ascribed, and no doubt justly due. His appearance in public life put an entirely new aspect upon the face of affairs, and for a while restored the Republic, and revived the hopes of the friends of freedom.

CHAPTER IV.

FRANCISCO MORAZAN, THE BULWARK OF THE REPUBLIC—OVERTHROW OF THE SERVILES—LIBERAL REFORMS—PROSTRATION OF THE CHURCH—ELEMENTS OF WEAKNESS. 1828—1830.

FRANCISCO MORAZAN, destined to stand in history as, in many respects the best, and in all the ablest man which Central America has yet produced, was born in Honduras in 1799. His father was a Creole from one of the French West India islands, and his mother a lady of the city of Tegucigalpa in Honduras. His education, so far as it was attained in schools, was neither better nor more extensive than that of others in the same condition in life; but he early evinced a quickness of apprehension and a thirst for knowledge, which soon placed him, in this respect, considerably in advance of his countrymen. He was also early distinguished for impetuosity of temper, associated with the greatest decision and perseverance of character, which, coupled with a free and manly bearing, and a frank and open manner, not only secured for him the love and respect of men, but qualified him to move and govern them. In 1824, he had risen to be Secretary General of Honduras, and subsequently Chief or Governor of the State. Naturally of a military turn, he was not entirely content with civil position, and turned his attention successfully to martial affairs. He led the Liberal troops of Nicaragua in the battle to which we have referred, on which turned his future career, and for a time the destinies of the entire country.

A series of sanguinary contests followed the affair of Sabina Grande, with varying success, but in which the Liberals fully held their own. On the 17th of December a fierce engagement took place at Santa Ana, in San Salvador, which, after severe loss on both sides, was terminated by a convention, providing that both armies should retire from the town. Cascaras, the Servile General, with the characteristic bad faith of his party, waited until the Liberals had fulfilled their part of the agreement, and then took possession of the city. This fraud was heralded as a triumph. The Serviles augmented their forces, and now boldly advanced into San Salvador, with the avowed object of reducing it to their control. Arce, depositing the office which he still continued nominally to hold, in the hands of the Vice-President, Beltranena, joined the invading column. The opposing armies met, not far from the city of San Salvador, and after a prolonged contest, the Liberals, under the command of Col. Merino, being much inferior in numbers, were defeated with great loss—the victors giving no quarter, and mercilessly slaughtering the wounded. The whole affair better deserves the name of a massacre, than a battle. These proceedings, as a matter of course, led to retaliations when the opportunity offered; and thus it was, that Servilism, still further contributed to give to war, in Central America, those barbarous features which have since so often horrified all civilized nations.

The victors laid immediate siege to the city of San Salvador, but were repulsed. Operations were, nevertheless, continued; city after city fell into their hands; and in the month of June, 1828, it appeared as if the entire State was subdued. A convention was signed by the State Government, agreeing that San Salvador should be occupied by the invading forces, and that Arce should call a Congress in the town of Santa Ana. Of course it was not expected that this would be a constitutional Congress, or an independent body, but merely

a set of instruments ready to register blindly the decrees of Arce and the Servile leaders in Guatemala.

The news of this agreement or surrender, so outraged the sentiments of the people of the city of San Salvador, that they simultaneously rose in arms, made prisoners of the Federal troops garrisoning the city, deposed the Government, and organized provisional authorities in their place, by whom the war was renewed with augmented fury. This popular demonstration was promptly seconded by Gen. Morazan, at the head of the Liberal army of Honduras, who had just succeeded in putting down the reactionary movements in that State. He utterly defeated the invaders in his first encounter with them, and, following up his successes with unparalleled vigor, in less than two months captured or completely dispersed them. Arce fled to Guatemala, and endeavored to resume his nominal authority; but the Vice-President refused to surrender it, and the popular tide setting against both him and his Servile adherents, he found himself no longer safe, even in Guatemala, and made a precipitate flight into Mexico—whence, it will shortly be seen, he subsequently endeavored to invade the country of which he had been the chief magistrate.

Morazan having completely restored the Liberals to power, in San Salvador, now advanced upon the Serviles in Guatemala. Their army destroyed, their revenues exhausted, and incapable of resistance, they sought to evade their impending fate by pursuing a temporizing policy. They proposed at first an armistice, and then made overtures of peace; but meantime the people in Quesaltenango repudiated their authority, and the department became involved in a civil war of the bloodiest character. The Antigua, or city of old Guatemala, also rose in arms and pronounced against the Servile Government. To crown their distress, Morazan, at the head of 2000 Honduras and Salvador troops, now marched into their territories. After several contests, in which he

was generally successful, on the 15th of March, 1829, he appeared before the city and demanded its surrender. The Serviles in despair again sought to temporize and gain time. They proposed a treaty, offering to recall all the Liberals whom they had exiled, and even to share the government with them, and to restore the former order of things. Morazan, convinced of their insincerity, after listening to their propositions, cut short all discussion by assaulting the city, which he soon carried at the point of the bayonet. To his honor be it said, notwithstanding that the outrages of the Serviles were still recent, and the blood of the Liberals they had slaughtered was scarcely dry, both life and property were respected.

The Servile authority was at once superseded, all the exiles recalled, and the survivors of the former government again established in the places which they had filled, at the time of the Servile insurrection. The Federal Congress, dissolved in 1826, was also assembled, and provisionally organized by Nicholas Espinoza, Senior Senator, as President. Its first act was to decree extraordinary honors to Gen. Morazan; his portrait was ordered to be hung in the Representative Hall, and a gold medal to be struck in commemoration of the reëstablishment of the Republic.

The Congress next proceeded to the election of President in place of the absconding Arce. The choice fell upon José Francisco Barrudia, who, as we have seen, was Governor of Guatemala, at the time of the treason of Arce, by whom he had been seized and imprisoned. It next proceeded to declare all laws enacted and proceedings adopted under Arce's authority, from the 6th of April, 1826, to the 12th of April, 1829, unauthorized and illegal, and the government which had existed during that period, a usurpation. This done, it applied itself to the regulation of the affairs of the country, which three years of anarchy had plunged into the direst confusion.

Thus passed the Republic through its second trial; its second terrible baptism of blood, unfortunately not the last! The scattered Liberals now returned to their homes. Many, during their exile, had visited the United States and Europe, and now came back with new and enlarged ideas upon all subjects connected with government, and with much practical information, which they were prepared to devote to the good of the country, and the cause for which they had suffered so much.

It will not be useless to revert here, for a single moment, to the condition of affairs in Guatemala during the period of Servile ascendancy. While in the possession of power, the leaders of that faction did not direct their efforts exclusively to the proscription of the patriots, or the extension of their control over the remaining States of the confederacy. They were, in other respects, true to their instincts and antecedents. No sooner had they intrenched themselves in station—the old noblesse or aristocracy, as a matter of course filling the executive offices—than the church required the fulfillment of the terms of the reactionary coalition. But the aristocrats, flushed with success, with characteristic bad faith, slighted their associates in the national treason, and consented only to the partial restoration of the prerogatives which the Liberals had swept away. The contest with San Salvador and the other States had created great excitement, unfavorable to the exercise of priestly influence on the popular mind; and had also called into the field considerable armies, which were also under the control of the secular arm of the coalition. The adherents of the Church, whatever their feelings of disappointment and chagrin, found it politic to submit to what they could not remedy, and to put up with a part of what they required and had a right to expect, rather than break openly with their treacherous friends. They had the wisdom to bide their time, and held themselves in readiness to make the most of coming events. When, therefore, the Servile

armies met with reverses, and the aristocratic leaders began to lose the material elements of their power, and to grasp at every means of restoring and strengthening it, they made unconditional compliance with the direct and implied terms of the coalition, the price of their continued adherence to the declining fortunes of the aristocracy. The secular leaders, restrained by no considerations of principle, yielded to every demand, and signalized the last hours of their wretched sway, by a complete reversal of all the measures of equality and amelioration which had previously been adopted. With an insanity, which distinguishes factions from legitimate parties, they sought to deface and ruin what they could no longer control. Trembling on the verge of overthrow, they not only reversed the measures of the Liberals, but enacted the severest laws against religious dissent; decreed the burning of all books not authorized by the church; and took steps for the reëstablishment of the Inquisition. They had already, in defiance of the constitution and laws, surrendered the slaves demanded by the British at Belize, and by this, and other acts of subserviency, secured the support of the English authorities there and at home. They forbade all reunions for whatsoever purpose, established a rigid censorship of the press, a body of paid spies,—in short, organized a military despotism. These acts were of course annulled, upon the triumph of Morazan, but were again put in force by the Servile party upon its accession to power in Guatemala, in 1841, and are still in existence—monuments of a barbarous age, and of the tyranny which, in that unfortunate State, disgraces the name of a Republic.

A Central American writer has sketched, with great truth and rhetorical vigor, the rise of Morazan, and the measures which followed the reëstablishment of the Republic.

"At this time appeared a man, raised up by Heaven as the Savior of his Country. Liberty girded him with her sword, and placed him at the head of the civil body. He knew the

men, the people, and the revolution. He appeared inspired for the country and for glory; opposition disappeared before him; he advanced from victory to victory, and bearing aloft the Constitution, entered the capital with it in his hands.[1] He again established the fundamental law, and gathered together the scattered authorities. Not a drop of blood was shed except on the field of battle. The Serviles disappeared from the public scene. The shackled press was liberated, and opened to every publication not obnoxious to common decency. In short, order, the Constitution, and the Republic reappeared. The patriotism, the valor, the intellect of one man had worked the change, and that man was Morazan!

"What, in this epoch, and in the quiet which followed their triumph, was the conduct of the Liberals? Not only was the enlightened policy of the Republic revived, and its previously established institutions again put into operation, but new measures of amelioration and popular good adopted. Although perfectly conscious that the reactionary faction was engaged in conspiracies, yet confiding in the popular honesty, no systems of espionage were encouraged. The utmost differences of opinion, and the widest latitude in expressing them, by word or pen, were permitted. Entire religious toleration was proclaimed, and equal protection to all forms of worship. The right of suffrage was extended to all adult males, whatever their color or condition. Individual rights received the most earnest guaranties, including the establishment of the principle of presumptive innocence in all cases of criminal accusations, *habeas corpus*, and trial by jury. The penal code was reformed, and made most equable. Public education also received the utmost attention; a well-organized system of instruction, capable of the widest expansion, was devised, under which schools, endowed and

[1] This is a literal fact; a copy of the Constitution was carried, with the flag of the Republic, at the head of the army.

free to all, speedily sprung up, and brought forward a class of youths, better instructed and better disciplined than any which had preceded them. Nor were the means of material progress neglected. Roads and other works of public utility were projected and undertaken; a survey of the Isthmus of Nicaragua authorized and executed; and a contract for the opening of an interoceanic ship canal was signed, on favorable terms, with the king of the Netherlands."

But while engaged in these beneficent works of reform and improvement, the government could not be wholly deaf to the popular demand for a vindication of the outraged constitution and laws, in the punishment of the men who had overthrown the Republic. In conformity with the general sentiment, on the 22d of August, 1829, the Federal Congress passed an act of banishment against the refugee Arce, and the officers which had adhered to him; as also against the late dictator of Güatemala, and those who had been associated with him in his administration. It also required that these men should return to the treasury the amount which they had appropriated on account of their salaries, and surrender a third part of their property to repair the damages which they had occasioned, and also refund the subsidies which they had exacted during the war. However demanded by strict justice, this latter step was no doubt impolitic, as giving the color of precedent to a system of confiscation, which, in the subsequent disturbances, was practiced, to a greater or less extent, by all parties. Legal proceedings were also instituted against the murderers of Flores and his fellow victims, in Quesaltenango; but as they involved a large number of persons, they were not pushed to their final issue.

While conceding thus much to the popular demand for justice, the Liberals nevertheless pursued the most kindly and conciliatory conduct towards the great body of their opponents. Such as were possessed of ability, and thought to

have a general patriotic disposition, were freely called to fill offices of trust and responsibility. No obstacles were interposed to prevent all who chose to do so, from rallying around the standard of their country. If this line of conduct, this excessive liberality, was not a theoretical, it was certainly, as will be seen in the sequel, under all the circumstances, a practical, error. The Serviles generally were incapable of appreciating the generosity with which they were treated, and accepted positions without relinquishing their original purposes.

Contemporaneously with these events a blow was struck at the Church, from which it has not, and can never recover. Overestimating the popular bigotry, and undaunted by the overthrow of the party with which they were allied, the priesthood commenced anew to plot against the Republic. They well comprehended that their influence and power must decline, as the principles of the Liberals became diffused, and the Republic itself consolidated. But their intrigues, incited by the archbishop, Ramon Casaus, in person, did not escape the vigilance of Morazan. Invested with plenary power for contingencies like this, and understanding fully the impossibility of reconciling the principles of the Church with those of the Republic, Mozaran perfected his arrangements for an effective blow, which fell on the night of the 11th of July, when the archbishop, and all the heads of the Dominican, Franciscan, Capuchin, and other monkish orders, were simultaneously seized, and escorted by soldiers to the port of Isabal, and thence shipped abroad. The remaining members of these orders were also summarily ordered to leave the country. This decisive step was followed by the suppression of all the convents by the State Government of Guatemala, and the appropriation of their property to purposes of education, and the use of the public charitable institutions. "The convent of the Dominicans was made a model prison, on the plan of those of the United States; another

was appropriated to the Lancasterian Normal School; a third became a public hospital, and the remainder were consecrated to other useful purposes. The nunneries were thrown open, and the inmates allowed to go where they pleased; but all females were thenceforth forbidden to take the veil." The Federal Congress, on the 7th of September following, not only ratified this act, but abolished all religious orders throughout the Republic. This action was speedily confirmed by all the States. It also declared the archbishop a traitor, confiscated his property, and banished him forever from the country, to which he never returned. Other measures of like tendency, including the prohibition of Papal bulls, followed in rapid succession; and finally, in 1832, the laws recognizing the Catholic creed as the faith of the country were abrogated, and not only tolerance to all creeds and forms of worship proclaimed, but entire religious freedom unconditionally decreed, and ratified by the several States. Subsequently the Serviles endeavored to reverse all these enlightened measures, and in Guatemala actually went through the form of their repeal; but it is contended that, emanating from the Republic, and adopted by the States, they cannot be affected by any local legislation, and still remain the supreme law of the land. The effect of these measures upon the popular mind, and the present position of the Church, I have attempted to indicate in another place. [1]

On the first of April of this year, the State of Costa Rica, by her geographical position separated from the rest of the Republic, embarrassed by the anomalous position of public affairs,—the confederation for the time being practically dissolved,—and desirous of avoiding collisions in which, from numerical weakness, she could not interfere with any effect, peaceably declared her separate independence, and, adopting the policy of strict neutrality, kept quietly on her course. When the Republic was again established, in January, 1831,

[1] See Narrative, chap. xxx.

she resumed her former relations, as one of the States of the Confederacy. She thus escaped all participation in the troubles which followed the insurrection of the Serviles. The tacit admission of the right of State secession, involved in this unopposed act, although the result of circumstances, and not of deliberation, had nevertheless a disastrous influence upon the permanence of the Confederacy. The respective powers of the State and General Governments, as we have already said, were not clearly defined at the outset, and when they afterwards became subjects of discussion, this precedent came in to overrule an impartial decision upon them.

The close of this year, as a whole fraught with results so favorable to the Liberal cause, and satisfactory to the friends of Republican institutions, was not wholly unobscured by clouds of evil portent. The revenues of Honduras were found inadequate to the support of the State Government, however economically administered. The State had also incurred considerable debts in its efforts to restore the Republic, and demands were made upon it which it could not meet. Under these circumstances, the State Legislature decreed a property tax, which, though trifling, was nevertheless universally resisted. It could not be collected. Similar attempts were made in San Salvador and Guatemala, with precisely the same results. Among the causes which most powerfully influenced the populace in behalf of independence, was the relief which it promised from the exactions which they had so long endured from Spain. This relief had been experienced under the first epoch of the Republic, and before the Serviles had distracted the country and crippled and destroyed its resources. Starting unembarrassed, had it not been for these men, it would have continued so—free from debt, and with a surplus revenue to be devoted to the public good. And it was not among the least of the evils which that faction entailed upon the country,—a canker at its vitals,—an exhausted treasury and inadequate revenues. The necessity

of taxation, incomprehensible to the ignorant, weaned them from their attachment to the cause for which they had before been enthusiastic, and from friends to the Republic, converted them, if not into open enemies, into discontented citizens. It operated more effectually than Servile intrigue, to bring about the overthrow of the confederacy. The government, from the consideration of measures for the public good, was absorbed in devising means to keep up the public credit; its resources crippled, it was unable to carry into effect the improvements which were imperiously demanded by the condition of the country; the construction of roads was suspended, and the public schools, without adequate support, became languishing. In the hope of better days, the desperate resort of a loan was adopted. Money, at ruinous rates, was procured from England, and with it, more fatal to the peace, prosperity, and integrity of the country than any other adverse circumstance, came the extension of British influence, and pretexts for British interference in the domestic and general relations of the States,—disputes, blockades, and territorial aggressions,—a black catalogue of unwarranted exactions, and a general policy justly liable to be stigmatized as piratical.

These opposing conditions must not be overlooked in the recital of events which followed. They will serve to break the force of the censure which might otherwise be cast upon the Liberal leaders, and explain what otherwise could only be regarded as the results of political blindness, and moral obliquity, not to say folly and corruption.

CHAPTER V.

BRITISH INTERFERENCE—NEW ELEMENTS OF DISCORD—SECESSION—THE LIBERALS DIVIDED AMONGST THEMSELVES—GLOOMY PROSPECTS FOR THE REPUBLIC. 1830—1836.

THE year 1830 found the Republic in peace, the Liberal party in undisturbed ascendancy, and devoting its energies to the promotion of the general prosperity. A treaty had been negotiated with the United States, and a Chargé d' Affaires from that Republic now resided in the country. England, although she had recognized the independence of Central America, and accredited public agents to its government, had as yet entered into no treaty relations with it; she now, however, proposed the negotiation of a treaty of amity and commerce, which proposition the Liberal Government, notwithstanding the irritation caused, some years before, by the peremptory and unauthorized demand for the surrender of the runaway slaves from Belize, was disposed to meet. But one obstacle interposed, and its real magnitude was apparent to Morazan. This was the retention of an indefinite extent of country around the mahogany establishment of Belize, by the British authorities, whose only claim to a foothold of any kind was a treaty with Spain, permitting English subjects to cut woods within certain limits, but with the express reservation of the sovereign territorial rights of the Spanish crown, and with an equally distinct preclusion from making any permanent establishments. This territory constituted part of the kingdom of Guatemala, and, with the overthrow of the royal

authority, accrued of right to the new Republic, with whom it was the duty of England to treat for the prolongation of the privileges conceded by Spain. But instead of doing so, the British Government availed itself of the circumstance to arbitrarily extend the limits of her *quasi* colony, without, in any manner, recognizing the Republican authorities, and in flagrant disregard of international law. This had not been overlooked by the Liberals in their first period of power; but before they were able to determine on a line of policy the Serviles secured ascendancy. Falling naturally into the English interest, they practically acquiesced in the usurpation. Now, however, when England proposed a treaty, the Government, under the advice of Morazan, acceded to the proposal, with the single proviso that its very first article should define both the limits and the time, within which England should be permitted to exercise the privileges it had previously enjoyed, under permission from the Spanish crown. Having already determined upon the unconditional retention of Belize, and looking greedily forward to territorial extension on the coast, the British Government was completely astounded by the decision of the Republic, upon whose weakness it had predicated all of its ambitious designs. Rightly regarding Morazan as the man who principally sustained the Government in this line of policy, the British agents in the country, and the authorities of the adjacent British dependencies, thenceforward made him the personal object of their hostility. They plotted with the Serviles against his authority, openly furnished arms to discontented factions, and when he subsequently came to the head of affairs, in all ways opposed and embarrassed his administration. Their hatred in the end became inflamed to such a degree, as to blind them to all considerations of duty, and betrayed them into the commission of acts revolting alike to decency and to humanity. For, incredible as it may seem, it was a British Consul-General, who, when the accomplished wife

of the absent President, flying from a brutal soldiery, sought the protection of his flag, not only refused her an asylum, but repulsed her,—a woman, a mother, unfriended, and alone,—rudely repulsed her from his door!

As soon as the position of the Republic in respect to the territory of Belize became known at that place, the British authorities assumed an arrogant and offensive tone towards the Republic. As a practical illustration of their contempt for its power, in a spirit of petty malice and revenge, they made a descent upon the large and fertile island of Roatan, on the coast of Honduras, and belonging to that State. They forcibly expelled the local authorities, and took possession of the island. The Federal Government made a formal complaint against this act of piracy, and it was disavowed by the British Cabinet. Yet the island has recently been seized again, by the same unscrupulous hands, and the former violence adduced by the British Government itself, as a proof of territorial right! At this time, and for similar reasons, pretensions were set up on the Mosquito shore,—pretensions originating in frauds, and urged in a spirit and by acts worthy only of the outlaws and pirates who established and gave a name to Belize.

The two years which followed the restoration of the Republic, as we have said, in spite of every obstacle, witnessed considerable advances, industrial and commercial, legislative and educational. Two new universities were established, one in San Salvador, another in Leon. The culture of cochineal was introduced, with great profit, into Guatemala; and that of coffee, with equal advantage, into Costa Rica. The culture of other staples was revived and extended in the remaining States. That of Indigo, which in San Salvador had fallen to not more than 3000, now rose to upwards of 7,000 bales annually.

But it is not to be supposed that the Serviles were idle during this period, or had accommodated themselves to the

existing order of things. They were silently but actively engaged in plots against the Government, in which those placed in position, by the mistaken generosity of the Liberals, were most conspicuous. Favors undeservedly conferred, never fail to secure the deadliest hostility of the recipient. At the close of 1831 the treason was ripe. Arce, the exiled President, invaded the Altos at the head of a hireling force from Mexico; Dominguez, a Servile officer, who had professed to be reconciled with the Republic, and had received a military command, headed a simultaneous insurrection in Honduras, where he was seconded by Ramon Guzman, governor of the Castle of Omoa. Arce, however, was met and routed, and Dominguez captured and shot. Guzman, at Omoa, finding himself without support, and relying upon the strength of the fort which he commanded, to enable him to hold out, raised the flag of Spain, and sent to Cuba for relief. Meantime, however, the fortress was besieged and taken by the Federal troops, and the Spanish flag, tied to the tail of a mule, was dragged through the streets of the town. In Nicaragua, also, whether by concert with the Serviles or otherwise is not known, the emissaries of Spain succeeded in creating some disturbances, but they were speedily suppressed.

This easy overthrow of the Serviles inspired the Liberals with great contempt for the power of that faction, and by removing all apparent danger from that source, destroyed one effective bond of union amongst those devoted to liberal ideas. It is always unsafe to undervalue opposition; and it was the more so, in this instance, from the circumstance that wide differences of opinion prevailed amongst the Liberals, in respect to certain great measures of policy. These differences, in the presence of common danger, had been sacrificed to the common good. But now they came conspicuously forward; and as collision, however slight, always

generates feelings, and often begets hostility, the hitherto undivided Liberals became separated into two parties, between whom the breach widened day by day. The grounds of difference, originating at the time of the adoption of the Constitution, I have already briefly indicated. Some favored a strong General Government, which should be as clear a representation of nationality as a monarchy itself, while others contended for the principle of State sovereignty, and a Federal Government which should confine its functions to the management of foreign relations, and the maintenance of harmonious intercourse between the States. These parties were called, respectively, Centralists, and Federalists,—designations, which, for a time, displaced those of Serviles and Liberals. Under the disguise of these names, the Serviles often exerted themselves to effect what they could not openly achieve.

The practical results of these differences, and the vagueness of the Constitution upon the points at issue, were disastrous. The State of San Salvador—devoted to the Republic, but jealous of its own prerogatives, and entertaining a strong feeling of rivalry towards Guatemala, which the general Servile tendencies of that State had converted into a feeling bordering on hostility, and believing the President more devoted to its interests than those of the nation,—in a moment of excitement, rashly vindicated its notions of State Rights, by seceding from the Confederation. Instead of permitting the State time to reflect on her folly, and to return quietly within the bosom of the nation, against, it is believed, the better judgment of Morazan, measures of coercion were resorted to, successfully for the moment, but most unfortunately in the end. For the first time Liberals were arrayed against Liberals, and the animosity of blood was begotten. With ill-suppressed exultation, the Serviles lent themselves to fan the flames of discord, and widen the opening

breach. They sided with one party or the other, according to circumstances, and as it might augment their ability for evil.

Morazan, having, meantime, been elected President, now committed the capital error of assuming the Executive power in San Salvador, and the responsibility of filling its administrative offices. Whatever may have been the exigencies of the case, the act stands an absolute usurpation of power, incapable of justification. The most that can be said, by way of apology is that, Morazan's whole career absolves him from the suspicion of bad motives, and favors the belief, that he acted from a patrotic, but mistaken sense of expediency. As might have been anticipated, the States Rights parties of Honduras and Nicaragua, in consequence of these irregularities, pointing to the former unrebuked action of Costa Rica, also decreed their separation. Costa Rica again did the same. The Federal Government saw its error, and instead of at once retracing its steps, stood surprised and irresolute. San Salvador, availing itself of this irresolution, again declared its separation, and the Republic suddenly presented the spectacle of total disruption. But this was more in appearance than in reality; for the acts of separation were, after all, only conditional. The States regarded them as measures necessary to procure a better understanding of the true relations of state and nation; and not as a repudiation of the principle of confederation, to which they still adhered. But they did not perceive or comprehend that every violence of this kind weakened the popular attachment to that principle, and established precedents for every subsequent insubordination. A people familiarized to blood becomes cruel; a frequent appeal to measures of final resort unhinges all systems of government, and opens wide the gates of anarchy. Secession, for purposes of coercion, degenerated into a measure of expediency, resorted to on any occasion, and on the paltriest

of pretexts; it sapped the foundations of the Republic, and finally overthrew it.

Ruin seemed impending over the country; the Serviles were exultant, and again began to display a threatening front. The Liberals, suddenly roused to a sense of their danger, paused in their career of madness, and began to retrace their steps. The States relinquished their antagonistic positions, and resumed their place in the Confederacy, and the Federal Government issued writs for the election of a new Congress, which should adjust all differences. But a new element of discord now appeared, to collect again the dispersing gloom. Some of the smaller States, jealous of Guatemala, which was greatly superior in extent and population to any other, and consequently possessed of greater influence in the National Congress, demanded that the States should have an equal voice in that body. This was a vagary which had sprung up during the States Rights agitation, and its recognition was demanded as a peremptory condition of proceeding with the elections. The Republican leaders, whose eyes were now fully opened to the perils which surrounded them, and capable of any sacrifices, finally induced Guatemala to assent to this unwarrantable requisition. But though some of the States proceeded with their elections, yet it was so generally obvious, that no such compromise, or rather sacrifice of rights, could be satisfactory or permanent, that the matter dropped, or was superseded by subsequent events; so that the proposed Congress never met. All compromises involving any surrender of principle (and almost all of necessity do) are wrong, and whatever their immediate result, invariably productive of greater evil in the end than they are designed to remedy.

Other measures were now advanced for securing a good understanding amongst the States, and harmony with the Federal Government. A revision of the Constitution was

proposed, and commissioners were named to prepare a project to be submitted to the country. To obviate the jealousy entertained of Guatemala, the seat of the Federal Government was transferred to the city of San Salvador; and, in imitation of the United States, an area extending ten leagues around the city was erected into a Federal District. But while this removed the Government further from the centre of Servile influence, and thus far conciliated the remaining States, it alienated and embittered the people of Guatemala, whose feelings of resistance were further roused by the proposition, subsequently carried into effect, of dividing that State into two or three distinct sovereignties. The general effect of these measures, actual and proposed, was to produce present quiet. The final accommodation of all differences was tacitly intrusted to the future, and meantime affairs went on very nearly as they had done before the mania of secession had seized upon the country. Attention was again devoted to measures of general good. The act of Religious Emancipation, elsewhere referred to, was now adopted, and ecclesiastical tithes, before reduced one-half, were now entirely abolished. The penal code of Spain, with some modifications, had been continued, but was corrupt and unwieldy. The ex-President, Barrundia, devoted himself to its reform. He translated the enlightened code of one of our own countrymen, Chancellor Livingston, which, with slight changes, was substituted for that of Spain. He moved the establishment of trial by jury; and it was adopted first in San Salvador, and very soon afterwards in Nicaragua and Guatemala. But strange as it may appear, this measure, elsewhere regarded as essential to the popular security, here met with popular opposition. It was an innovation not comprehended by the people at large,—it fell gradually into disuse, and was finally abolished.

The spirit which animated the Liberals, at this time, may be partially inferred from the fact that the Federal Congress

decreed a general mourning for Jeremy Bentham, whose works were popular amongst the Liberal leaders.

Before proceeding further, it is necessary to refer to an event which, although not of great immediate importance, introduced another and most fearful element in the affairs of the country, and was the precursor of innumerable calamities. The decided proceedings against the principal officers of the Church, and against the beneficed clergy, had not directly affected the subordinate and rural priesthood. But when marriage was decreed to be a civil contract, requiring only the authorization of the secular authorities, and the fees derived therefrom were suspended, when tithes came to be abolished, the hostility of the priests was raised to its highest pitch. They found abundant pretexts for appealing to the popular prejudices, against the general policy of the government. The concessions made to foreigners, and especially the act of religious freedom, they asserted, were designed to encourage an influx of population from abroad, which should overwhelm and enslave the native inhabitants. They raised a concerted outcry against "los estrangeros," strangers, the echoes of which may yet be heard amongst the mountains of Guatemala. This outcry, of course, found but a slight response amongst the educated classes, or that portion of the population in which white blood predominated. But these did not, nor do they now constitute, the great mass of the people. The Indians, spread all over the country, in some wide districts and large towns forming the only inhabitants, were not insensible to these appeals. The hatred engendered by the Conquest still smouldered in their hearts, and it required but little to fan it into a flame. From the advent of the foreigner, they dated their prostration, and from an increase of his power, they imagined, new exactions and a further depression would follow. True to their universal character, they listened in silence to the inflammatory appeals of the priests; but that silence was only the calm which pre-

cedes the storm. A wide conspiracy amongst the aborigines was organized in San Salvador, which first betrayed itself in overt acts on the 24th of July, 1832, when an Indian named Anastacio Aquino, a native of the Indian pueblo of Santiago Nunualco, proclaimed an Indian government, and at the head of a body of his adherents, proceeded to attack the neighboring towns; putting to death indiscriminately, all foreigners, creoles, and meztizos. He was, however, soon overcome by the troops of the government, in an attack on San Vicente, and, with his followers, captured and shot. Conceiving that the conspiracy involved the entire Indian population, the Government at first resolved upon their general extermination, but better counsels prevailed, or the attempt was regarded as too hazardous; at any event, it was not undertaken.

The part assumed by the priests in these disturbances was punished by a suppression of all the *fiéstas* and saints' days of the ecclesiastical calendar, except Sunday and five holidays. The numerous *fiéstas* had long been regarded as serious interruptions of general industry. "This was, however, one of the measures against which the Serviles were enabled to avail themselves of the popular feeling, so as to direct it against the Liberals. The cry of heresy and profanity had long been raised against the acts of the latter, but it never told so effectually, even upon the most fanatical, as when their own pleasures, or rather their vices and excesses, were interfered with."

The year 1834, was signalized by further collisions between the State and Federal authorities in San Salvador, in which the latter were successful, and by some disturbances, resulting from personal ambition, in Nicaragua. Early in 1835, Costa Rica also, although containing less than 100,000 inhabitants, became involved in troubles, occasioned, it would seem, by the jealousy, existing between the old capital, Cartago, and the new capital, San José, but in which the former

availed itself of the pretext of extending the right of suffrage, limited by the Constitution to landholders, to secure the popular feeling in support of its designs. It is, nevertheless, alleged, by the native historians, that the priests here, as elsewhere, were the prime instigators of the movement; and there is too much reason to believe, that they were ready to avail themselves of any ground of excitement, to weaken and embarrass the ruling party in the State and Nation.

Early in 1835, the Federal Congress, having, meanwhile, removed its sittings to San Salvador, promulgated the new Constitution reported by the committee, to which the task of framing it had been delegated. It was based upon the instrument of 1824, with many liberal and equable modifications; but it encountered, as a matter of course, the undivided hostility of the Serviles, and the opposition of a considerable part of the Liberals, and was rejected by every State except Costa Rica. The respective States proposed different, and in most cases, irreconcilable reforms.

A period of suspense ensued; the Liberals were greatly embarrassed; and as no progress had been made towards the establishment of a settled government, the whole of the year 1836, in the language of a writer on that period, may be "compared to the intervals between the eruptions of the active volcanoes, which form so apt an emblem of the people of the country where they are situated." The Government was not, however, wholly inactive. It had early been convinced of the necessity of increasing the European element in the population of the country, and had adopted various measures, looking to that result. The Constituent Assembly had taken action upon the subject, and the Federal Congress had subsequently, not only removed every obstacle, religious and otherwise, but offered large encouragement to emigration. This year witnessed the first practical results of this policy. An extensive scheme of colonization was started in England, under the comprehensive name of "The Eastern Coast of

Central America Commercial and Agricultural Company." It was organized under the terms of a general grant, which provided that a certain extent of territory, and a variety of privileges should accrue to any company which might, within four years, colonize two hundred families, and within ten years, one thousand. The locality selected was Boca Nueva, Department of Vera Paz, State of Guatemala. The projected town was called Abbotsville, and the name is still to be found on the maps of that period. But the managers of the company were, for the most part, unprincipled speculators, and although a considerable number of individuals were sent out, and some $200,000 expended, the whole project fell through. The emigrants were of the worst class, and the circumstances of location and climate were fatal to the success of any scheme, however well devised or supported. Many died, others returned, or left for the West Indies, and a few penetrated into the interior. At the end of two years nothing remained of the attempted colony, except a small clearing, half occupied by graves, and a few decaying dwellings.

As observed by Mr. Dunlap, "It seems a most singular infatuation in Europeans, to attempt colonizing on pestiferous shores, under a burning sun, where no native of a temperate region, not even those of the interior of the same country, can enjoy tolerable health. Had they, instead, secured lands on the delightful banks of the Lake of Nicaragua, or on the table lands of Guatemala or Costa Rica, with a communication to the nearest port, the result might have been very different; but the failure of most colonies lately founded, no doubt arose from their being undertaken by people, strangers to the country and the climate where they were to be established; and it is to be hoped, that if such schemes are again undertaken, persons acquainted with the country will previously be consulted."

This attempt, on the part of British adventurers, to estab-

lish themselves in Central America, was characterized by a system of tactics, which seems inseparable from all British movements in that portion of the world, and which has led to the usurpation of Belize, the seizure of Roatan, and the extension of British dominion over the Mosquito shore. No sooner had this company effected a lodgment within the territories of Guatemala, than they sought to induce the British Government to extend its dominion over it, and make it another centre of assault upon the territories of the Republic. They represented themselves likely "to sustain for England *all that she has got, or can hope to get*" in those regions; and, in a memorial addressed to Lord Palmerston, dated October 28, 1835, this policy was supported, on the ground of affording a check upon the United States, and of "securing for Great Britain a position far more prominent" than that of any, and of all other nations in Central America! But although these tactics failed in this instance, they nevertheless deserve a passing exposure, for the benefit of those who, discrediting their own senses, profess to believe it impossible that the conduct of British subjects and agents, and of the British Government in Central America, has been counter to their plausible protestations upon the subject.

CHAPTER VI.

THE REIGN OF TERROR—WAR OF CASTES—RAFAEL CARRERA—DISSOLUTION OF THE REPUBLIC—OVERTHROW AND FLIGHT OF MORAZAN—ANARCHY. 1836—1841.

We are now approaching the most disastrous period of Central American history, the reign of anarchy and blood, when the worst elements of civil and social discord were let loose upon that devoted country. We have seen how Servilism, failing in its open assaults on the Republic, descended to every form of conspiracy and treason; how the strength and *prestige* of the General Government had been weakened and destroyed by bad precedent, and by mistaken policy towards the States; how the great Liberal party had not only become divided, but its members embittered against each other; how British influence had been arrayed against the actual government, and the liberal tendencies of the country; and how the power of the Church, although broken, was yet madly exerted to foment social disorders, and create a war of castes, more to be avoided than any other species of conflict amongst men, because it is necessarily a war of extermination. The Republic might have overcome all these opposing circumstances; survived all the shocks to which it was exposed; rooted out the elements of disease in the body politic, and triumphantly vindicated the glorious principles upon which it had been founded. But there was one source of weakness, a canker at the heart, which was more fatal to its

existence and success than priestly, or servile, or foreign, or whatever other distracting influences, or all combined, and that was POPULAR IGNORANCE! Fatally for the Republic, that mass of the population, whatever its desires or impulses, was sunk in ignorance.

Up to this time, the concurrence of the people generally, in the measures of amelioration and good government which were adopted, had been secured more by appeals to their feelings than to their judgment—a false and unstable reliance, which makes all government a thing of caprice, comparable only to a rudderless bark upon a turbulent sea. Relief from taxation and exactions of every kind was one of the controlling influences, with the people at large, in their overthrow of the Spanish authority. Incapable of comprehending the requirements of government, they ignorantly claimed exemption from contributing to its support. And when the reformed code was adopted, and prisons, from dark dens of death were required to be constructed on a new plan, they neither understood the necessity nor humanity of the change. They only considered that it drew from them money and labor, and therefore they opposed it. They regarded trial by jury, not as a measure of vital import, of security to life and property, but as an unwarrantable demand upon their time and services; and without confidence in each other, distrusted the impartiality of their fellows constituting the jury. Such were the considerations which controlled them; and in this manner did the most laudable acts of the Republic, artfully misrepresented by its enemies, contribute to its downfall.

When the Livingston code of laws was put in operation in Guatemala, the people of the town of San Juan Ostuncala, who were nearly all aborigines, being called upon to construct new prisons, rose *en masse* against the circuit judges, then holding their first term of court in that town, and compelled them to fly. A short time after a collision ensued be-

tween the populace, and the authorities, and troops of the district who endeavored to enforce the laws, in which, after a severe struggle the former were defeated. In their flight they left behind them some of their ancient stone idols, hitherto concealed from the priests, but which they had brought from their hiding places, in the belief that they would be able to assist them against their assailants. This circumstance furnishes an evidence alike of the popular ignorance and general superstition.

But the dire consequences of the general ignorance were not fully exemplified until the following year, when the cholera first made its appearance in Central America. Physicians were few, and from neglect and improper treatment the disease spread with fearful rapidity, and was attended with the greatest mortality. General consternation pervaded the entire population; never before had an epidemic swept over their country. The government, prompt to discharge its duties, took active measures to mitigate, if it could not stop the ravages of the pestilence. "Not only all the medical staff of Guatemala," says an English author, then resident in the country, "but most of the young students, were furnished with medicines and sent to those places where it was thought their presence was most urgently required. The poor Indians, who were dying in great numbers, are generally panic stricken when the least epidemic prevails. Their terror was now excessive. The priests, who had before learned to improve, even such opportunities, were ready to foment their fears, and to awaken their resentment against the Liberals, by insinuating that they had poisoned the waters with a view to destroy the Indians, intending to repeople the country with foreigners; and as a proof of this they pointed to the colony just established in Vera Paz. The too credulous aborigines, who had so lately been excited against some of the reforms, and especially that of trial by jury, needed no more to rouse them to rebellion. Their cry was now di-

rected against the poisoners and the foreign residents. Many of the doctors had to effect their escape as best they could. Some were seized and killed, being forced to swallow the whole contents of their medicine chests, or water was poured down their throats till they died, and the results were considered conclusive evidence of their guilt."

The insurrection became general in the districts in which the aboriginies predominated, and the desolation of the pestilence was soon followed by the more dreadful devastations of civil war. Irregular and tumultuous assemblages, avowing the bloodiest purposes, became common in places where, as yet, there had been no open revolt. An ill-advised attempt to disperse one of the largest of these, by a small body of troops, at the town of Santa Rosa, on the 9th of June, 1837, was successfully resisted; a part of the troops were killed, and the remainder forced to retreat with precipitation. The affair, in itself, was not of much consequence; like a thousand similar affrays, it might have caused a momentary excitement, and then have been forgotten. But, like the battle of Sabina Grande, which, by bringing forward Morazan, changed, for the time, the destinies of the country, and averted the fate which impended over it, the rout at Santa Rosa marks an era in the history of Central America—the era of anarchy and blood. The war of castes, of which the aboriginal insurrection in San Salvador had been but a precursor, now commenced in earnest. The leader of the mob at Santa Rosa was Rafael Carrera, whose name thenceforward became conspicuous in the annals of the country, and a synonym for all that was fearful to the people of Guatemala, over whom he soon come to sway the terrors of an irrepressible and despotic power.

Carrera's history forms a most striking contrast to that of Morazan. Both were born of revolutions; both came to exercise unlimited power; but there the parallel ends. One was the savior for the time, of Republican institutions—the

other their assassin; the liberality, the generosity, the patriotism of one, were not more conspicuous, than the ignorance, the bigotry, the treachery, and the brutality of the other. One was the impersonation of progress and freedom, the idol of a republican and lawfully constituted soldiery; the other of retrogradation and tyranny, and the blind leader of fanatic and tumultuous hordes animated by hate and lust, and eager for pillage, revenge and murder.

Carrera is a Ladino, or mixture of white and Indian, with a great predominance of the latter—a dark, uncommunicative, irrascible man, of a bold, unscrupulous spirit, and possessed of great determination and perseverance. When he led the mob at Santa Rosa, he was only about twenty-one years of age—a pig driver, unable either to read or write, but yet already possessed of considerable influence amongst the lower classes of the Indian population. His affinities of blood, and the force of circumstances, rather than his bravery or his abilities, were the elements of his strength and success, and ultimately raised him to power—a power never controlled by justice, or tempered with mercy.

Carrera was, at the first, a mere tool of the priests, and seems really to have believed the story which they artfully and industriously circulated, that the cholera was induced by a systematic poisoning of the waters by the government and the foreigners, and that, under pretext of checking the disease, the physicians, sent out by the authorities, were actually engaged in the prosecution of the design of exterminating the Indian and mixed population.

Inspirited by the success at Santa Rosa, and fixing upon Carrera as the instrument of their purposes, the priests willingly lent themselves to the extension of his influence. They proclaimed to the natives that he was their protecting angel Rafael, descended from heaven, to take vengeance on the heretics, Liberals, and foreigners, and to restore their ancient dominion. They devised various tricks to favor the

delusion, which were heralded as miracles. A letter was let down from the roof of one of the churches, in the midst of a vast congregation of Indians, which purported to come from the Virgin Mary, commissioning Carrera to lead in a general revolt against the government, and assuring him of the tangible interposition of Heaven!

Carrera, by these means, soon found himself at the head of a large body of excited, but undisciplined Indians. From fear or policy, he avoided any general engagement with the forces sent against him, and never suffered himself to be drawn into a conflict, except when the chances were greatly in his favor. The first encounter, after the affair of Santa Rosa, although the Indians fought with desperation, under the assurance of immediate entrance into paradise of all who fell, resulted in the defeat of the insurgents. Their obstinate resistance, however, had maddened the troops of the government, who, in the heat of the moment, committed great excesses, which tended to make subsequent reconciliation impossible. Their conduct gave color to the popular belief, that the complete annihilation of the Indians was meditated. The fight of Mataquesquintla, was, therefore, without any decisive effect. Carrera fled from place to place, but everywhere lighted the flames of insurrection, which now became universal. The energies of the government were exhausted, in vain attempts to bring matters to a final issue. Guerilla bands, and bodies of marauders and robbers infested all the public highways, and swept off the inhabitants of the undefended estates. In fact, out of the principal towns, and except in their immediate vicinity, the completest anarchy prevailed.

In Guatemala the questions which had before divided the people were, to a great degree, swallowed up in that of the public safety. The Liberal Government of the State found itself beset with difficulties and dangers on every side, and the Serviles themselves were affrighted at the storm which

they had contributed to raise, and which could no longer be controlled. In this emergency, the Liberals proposed a reconciliation or compromise, in order to avert the common danger. The Serviles required the resignation of the governor, Galvez, one of the most decided, yet most moderate and able of the Liberals, the dissolution of his ministry, and the induction of new officers to be selected from those neutral or moderate in politics. The Liberals, true to their name, acceded to the demands, and even allowed the establishment of a semi-Servile government, rather than incur the responsibility of still further endangering the State.

The new administration, under pretence of the necessity of these measures in restoring peace, suspended the law of *habeas corpus* and many other guaranties of the constitution, shackled the press, and established a military regimen; in short, betrayed the most decided reactionary tendencies. The excesses of the military, who were invested with extraordinary powers, also contributed to create general discontent; and although these measures, under the belief that they were in some degree required by the public exigencies, received a tacit support from one portion of the Liberals, yet the great body of that party regarded them with fear and hostility. Much irritation and some serious disputes speedily ensued. Antigua Guatemala, head of the department of Sacatepequez, always jealous of the new city, pronounced against the State Government,—denounced it as an usurpation, and placed itself under the protection of the Federation. The State Government retaliated by declaring Secatepequez in a state of insurrection, and proclaimed martial law against it. But similar pronunciamentos soon followed in the Departments of Chiquimula, Salamar, and Vera Paz. A portion of the troops, also indignant at what they regarded the treachery of the acting government, rose in the capital itself, and demanded the restoration of the officers who had resigned to favor the so-called compromise.

In this confusion, the factions called in the sword of Carrera, who, with the aid of his ferocious guerillas, marched upon Guatemala, captured it, and placed a man named Velasquez at the head of the State. This excitement was followed by the greatest alarm, for Carrera's soldiery could not be restrained,—disorders of every kind, robberies and violence became of constant occurrence. The people demanded their expulsion, which was effected with difficulty,—the Serviles forcing the Liberals, who were temporarily associated with them, to take the lead in the movement, and incur the hatred of Carrera and his followers. They quietly remained in their houses, and even, it is said, conveyed secret assurances to Carrera that it was done in defiance of their wishes. A partial understanding had already been effected between them, and from thenceforth the Serviles were committed to Carrera and the insurrection.

The Liberals of the Departments of Quesaltenango, Solola, and Totonicapan, where the insurrection was not yet general, now erected those provinces into a new State, called Los Altos, and asked admission into the Federation. The application was favorably received; and soon after the new State was formally recognized, and admitted into the Federation in its sovereign capacity. Here the Liberals sought refuge from Guatemala, where the Serviles, installed by force, and leagued with the aborigines, enacted the most proscriptive measures against all who opposed their authority. Had they not met with a speedy check, it is impossible to say to what height their violence might have attained.

The Federal Government, at the commencement of the insurrection in Guatemala, had not attempted to interfere. It was doubted whether it had a right to do so until the authority of the State had failed to vindicate itself; nor had it the means, at the moment, of effective interposition. The people of the other States were not eager to interfere in quarrels in which they were not directly interested. When, therefore,

Morazan found himself forced by circumstances and the Constitution to interpose, he experienced great difficulty in raising the requisite forces. He was finally compelled to advance at the head of an insufficient number of men. He reached the district of Mita, the seat of the rebellion, and although victorious in every engagement, yet at the end of a severe campaign found, to his deep regret, that no decisive result had been achieved. The new posture of affairs in Guatemala now embarrassed him still further. The Servile policy was effectively adapted to keep up the war. At the head, therefore, of his harrassed army, he now turned his face towards that city. The Serviles knew the man, and overawed by his presence, attempted no opposition. To bend, they had long before learned, was wiser than to break. Their obvious policy was to temporize and evade,—a policy always coupled with deceit and treachery. The people, relieved by the approach of Morazan, demanded the resignation of the Servile authorities; and with a well-feigned patriotic compliance, they surrendered their offices into the hands of Morazan. A new election was shortly afterwards ordered, which resulted in the choice of Mariano Rivera Paz, a moderate Liberal, as Chief of the State. The first acts of the restored Liberals were to proclaim a general amnesty of all political offences committed since the Independence, and to make a general appeal to the inhabitants for the suppression of interior disorders. The immediate effect upon the insurgents was favorable, and Morazan again taking the field against them, they proposed terms which were accepted, and a treacherous peace was patched up, to be broken at the first favorable moment.

The presence of Morazan in the capital of Guatemala was signalized by an attempt to corrupt his patriotism, and bring him into the Servile interest. "This arrogant, and yet most subservient party," says a Central-American author, "received Morazan with well-affected satisfaction; they surrounded him, and overwhelmed him with flattery and adulation, For the

moment, they reflected on him the disgrace which attached to themselves, and deceived with the belief that they had corrupted his principles, they finally openly proposed to him to abandon his supporters, abolish existing institutions, and assume the dictatorship of the country. Their proposition was met with the scorn which it deserved; and, covered with shame, the parricides were thrown back again upon their more congenial policy of intrigue and insurrection."

While these events were taking place in Guatemala, the other States were daily becoming more and more disorganized. The attempt to agree upon a new Constitution had failed, and the objections against the old one had undergone no diminution. Distrust and discontent were general; the seething of the popular elements was constantly going on, and occasionally breaking out in insurrectionary ebullitions. Morazan had no sooner restored a temporary calm in Guatemala, than he was called to suppress serious disorders in San Salvador. A man of unsurpassed daring and cruelty, Francisco Malespin, had excited a revolt which threatened disastrous consequences. The grounds upon which it was started are not known; indeed, parties had now become subdivided into numerous factions, without any clear conception of their own wants, and swayed by the impulses of the moment.

Hardly had Morazan passed out of Guatemala, followed by the Federal troops, before Carrera again concentrated his Indian followers, and assumed the offensive with renewed vigor. He attacked a body of government troops stationed, under the command of Col. Bonilla, at Xalapa, and not only routed them, but drove the fugitive remnants beyond the borders of the State, into San Salvador. This success inspired the insurgents with confidence, and increased their numbers. Carrera had not forgotten his ignominious expulsion from the city of Guatemala; and, burning for revenge, he directed all his energies to secure its overthrow. An attempt was made by a petty force, at Petapa, to stop his advance, but it

was unsuccessful, and he continued his march. Hardly had the news of the outbreak reached the city, before he appeared before it, and the day following he entered without resistance. The excited savage had sworn to burn the city to the ground, and was with great difficulty prevailed upon to forego his purpose. He nevertheless exercised the greatest cruelties upon the Liberal inhabitants, and his soldiers plundered them with impunity. The Serviles enjoyed entire immunity, and cemented firmly their alliance with the Indian leader.[1]

But in the midst of the intoxication of this triumph, Gen. Salazar, who had collected a force of nine hundred men, encountered a large body of the insurgents returning from the plunder of a neighboring town, at a place called Villa Nueva, and favored by circumstances, defeated them with terrible slaughter. More than five hundred of the Indians were slain. Carrera, affrighted at the disaster, at the head of his followers, abandoned the city, and fled to the fastnesses of Mita. Had this effective blow been followed up, the insurrection would no doubt have been permanently crushed. But Salazar was embarrassed by other officers in the Servile in-

[1] Concerning the events following the capture, Don Jose Barrundia, a living author, writes as follows:

"Who can describe the agony of Guatemala beneath the fury of the savage, and the oppression of his hordes? It is fearful to recall the continued assaults on the houses, within which, through doors and windows, the roving soldiery wantonly discharged their arms, killing and wounding the unresisting occupants, without regard to age or sex. Insult and assassination were common in the public streets, in the broad light of day. What then were the horrors of the night, when the doleful songs of the savages, mingled with drunken shouts, the shrieks of violated women, and the groans of husbands, fathers and brothers, slaughtered in vain attempts at resistance, all combined to appal the souls of men?

"All this time, however, the Serviles enjoyed immunity, beneath the shadow of the monster. He received the homage of the noblesse; incense was offered to him in the temples, and in the great cathedral, he was impiously proclaimed as an angel sent of God!"

terest, who were now prolific in temporizing plans, and compelled him to proceed to Guatemala, where he threw up his commission in disgust. And although he was afterwards induced to resume it, yet meantime the insurgents had recovered from their alarm. The indomitable Carrera again appeared in the field, and made an incursion into San Salvader, reduced the towns of Santa Ana and Aquachahan, and then rapidly fell back within the State of Guatemala. Here, however, he was met once more, and again defeated. A series of contests ensued, with results generally unfavorable to the insurgents, who, learning that Morazan was organizing a force for their complete annihilation, became dispirited, and evinced a disposition to abandon the struggle, which Carrera himself could not resist. He had the foresight, however, to make such terms with the government as should best secure his ulterior purposes. On the 23d of December, 1838, a treaty was signed, by the terms of which the insurgents agreed to surrender their arms and recognize the constituted authorities, provided Carrera was made commander of Mita, and a general pardon conceded to all the rebels. Carrera, however, under pretence that it was required to defend the district, continued to keep on foot a considerable force; and, being now invested with a legal authority, came to constitute himself a principal power in the State. This result showed the weakness of the Government, and was Carrera's most effective stride towards the attainment of supreme authority.

This event, and the feverish condition of the country at large, showed that the government, general and state, were powerless for good. They were without resources, and destitute of any principle of common action. Morazan's personal popularity and exertions, alone kept up the appearance of national vitality, and the semblance of order. The Federal Congress met in 1838, and Morazan frankly communicated to it the state of the country. The dispirited members heard in silence; and conscious of their utter weakness seem, from

the first, to have surrendered the Republic to its fate. They passed a decree, conceding to the States many of the powers which had been invested in the General Government, reserving to the latter little more than the management of foreign affairs, and the collection of the customs. This was a virtual recognition of the dissolution of the Republic, and the last act of the Congress, which now immediately dissolved its sessions, and never again assembled. The State Legislature of Guatemala, dismayed at the prospect before it, followed this example.

The several States were thus thrown upon their own resources. Had they been truly wise and patriotic, at this critical moment, they would have sacrificed all their animosities, prejudices, and conflicting opinions upon the altar of the common good. But scattered over a wide expanse of country, with slow and insufficient means of communication, it was impossible for those who desired it to effect an understanding, or devise means to meet the emergency. There were many, also, who saw in a general disruption, a ready means of individual, local advancement. The consequences may readily be anticipated. A convention to revise the Constitution of the State had been called at Nicaragua, to meet in the month of May. The course of the Congress embarrassed its action; it was impossible to define the powers of the State as a member of a Confederation, when that Confederation had virtually surrendered its powers. Regarding itself as bound to provide for the sovereignty which it represented, it declared Nicaragua an independant Republic, and framed a constitution accordingly. It nevertheless adhered to the idea of nationality, and provided for the resumption of its former position, as a State of the Republic, whenever the Confederation should be reörganized. Honduras followed the example of Nicaragua. Costa Rica was revolutionized by a chief named Carillo, who deposed the legally elected governor, Aguilar, and assumed the dictatorship.

He subsequently dispensed with all forms of law, and, for four years, exercised absolute authority. Yet his administration was generally wise and beneficial, and under it that little State made considerable advances in material prosperity.

At the close of the year 1838, the Republic presented a mere wreck, to which San Salvador, Guatemala, and the new State of Los Altos only adhered. Morazan was the sole representative of nationality, and on the 1st of February following, his term of office expired. There was now neither President nor Congress, nor any unity of action amongst the States, for filling the vacancies. Morazan, actuated by a high sense of duty, and still indulging the hope, that by keeping up a central power, the reörganization of the Republic, which all affected to desire, might be secured, under the advice of his friends, determined to maintain his position as President, until a successor should be chosen. He had always asserted the principle, and acted upon it, that it was the duty of the General Government to preserve the integrity of the Confederation; in other words, he denied the right of secession. This was the secret of the opposition to him of a large part of the Liberals. Consistent to the last, he coupled the avowal of his determination to hold on to the supreme authority, with that of compelling the acknowledgment of the Republic, by all the States which had constituted its members.

This avowal led to collisions with Nicaragua and Honduras, already committed to the opposite side, which continued during the entire year, 1839. Notwithstanding the inequality of the contest, the Federal leader, effectively aided by Gen. Cabañas, one of the best and bravest men which the country has ever produced, sustained himself with great success. San Salvador was invaded by the united troops of Nicaragua and Honduras; but after penetrating into the interior, they were defeated in a series of decisive engagements, and being driven into Honduras, that State was over-

run by the Federal forces, who, in turn were defeated and compelled to fall back. While fortune was thus oscillating between the two sections, exhausting and embittering both, and rendering reconciliation impossible, the Serviles in Guatemala were planning an effective demonstration in their own behalf.

They entered into a league with Carrera, and when Morazan became most deeply involved in troubles elsewhere,—troubles which they augmented by every means in their power,—the Indian leader, in response to their call, marched at the head of five thousand men, upon the city of Guatemala. The little garrison of three hundred men offered no resistance, and the Indian, dignified by the title of General, entered, in triumph, the city from which he had been twice expelled. He renewed many of the previous acts of violence against the Liberals, demanding from them $20,000 for himself and men, but, on the whole, behaved with more moderation than on his previous visit. He now became practical Dictator of the State,—installing a government subservient to his wishes, which at once proceeded to proscribe and put to death, all those of opposing politics, whose position, influence, or past conduct had made them obnoxious or dangerous to the usurpers. History recoils from recording the details of this reign of terror; when the sacred forms of law were violated, and made the instruments of hate, revenge, and murder. These acts were followed, in due course, by a declaration of withdrawal from the Republic, and by a convocation of Servile partizans, called a representative council, which decreed that Guatemala constituted a distinct and sovereign state.

And thus was consummated the third triumph of the Serviles in Guatemala. Leagued with Despotism, Priestcraft, and Savage Ignorance, they stood victors amidst the ruins of civil and social order, in a country which they had made desolate and waste. Agriculture was prostrated, commerce

destroyed, and the fountains of public wealth dried up. In the midst of ashes, blood, and desolation, they proceeded to abolish the liberal laws of their predecessors, and, as far as possible to return to the systems of Spain.

In this work of retrogradation none were more active than the priests, who procured the reëstablishment of some of the convents, and were clamorous for a restitution of their tithes and other revenues, as also of their confiscated property. But to their amazement, Carrera peremptorily refused his assent. The Indian had learned the utter selfishness of the priesthood, and was too wise to strengthen and again build up a power, which might be used against himself. The astonished Serviles now found that the chieftain was their master, not their slave!

Meantime the priests in Los Altos, (Quesaltenango), had raised an insurrection, which being promptly seconded by Carrera, resulted in the overthrow of the Liberal or Federal authorities, and the reïncorporation of that State in Carrera's Dictatorship of Guatemala. Guzman, the President, a number of his officers, and many prominent Liberals, were captured by Carrera, and put to death in the most brutal manner. Others fleeing to San Salvador, were overtaken by his subordinates, and murdered by slow tortures, in modes too revolting to be recounted. The history of warfare amongst savages fails to parallel the atrocities which were committed.

San Salvador now stood alone in its recognition of the Republic—the only stronghold of the Liberal interest. But the spirit of Morazan was unbroken. He determined to make one more effort in behalf of the cause to which his life had been dedicated. And although surrounded by enemies and timid friends, he succeeded in raising a force of twelve hundred men, with which he marched on Guatemala. Nothing could check his advance, and on the 18th of March, 1840, he entered Guatemala. He had relied much upon the popular feeling in his favor in that city; but the spirit of the people

had been broken by the reverses which they had suffered; his friends had been slaughtered or expelled, and he found himself alone and unsupported. A host of enemies closed around him; his force, reduced to less than one thousand men, was hemmed in the principal plaza by upwards of five thousand Indians, under the command of Carrera in person. Comprehending that all was lost, and knowing well that the rules of civilized warfare were not recognized amongst his assailants, Morazan resolved to cut his way through them and effect a retreat. The conflict was terrible; more than half his officers and men were killed, or captured and massacred Twenty-three officers, the chivalry of Central America, who sought the protection of the British flag, were surrendered by the British Consul, and shot like dogs, beneath his portal. Those who reached the French Consulate were saved.

Morazan, having effected his retreat, returned to San Salvador, only to find that the various factions, taking advantage of his misfortunes, had united against him. The truth that all was lost could no longer be disguised; the unfailing hope, which had previously sustained him, whispered not one word of encouragement, and, on a dark and stormy night, emblematic of his fortunes, with a handful of followers, whose attachment no reverses could dampen, nor even death destroy, the last President of the Republic sailed, a fugitive, from the land which he had twice saved from desolation, and to whose welfare he had dedicated his intellect and energies. This little band of exiles, the forlorn hope of the Liberal party, arrived safely in Valparaiso, where they remained for nearly two years.

Carrera feared no man in Central America except Morazan, and elated by the news of his flight, his first impulse, was to grasp at that power in the country at large, which he had now attained in the State of Guatemala. He accordingly raised a large army, and marched into San Salvador. No effectual resistance was made to his progress, which was

marked with robbery and desolation. Siding with one of the local factions, he placed it in power; but finding that the States of Honduras and Nicaragua had united to resist him, and that his Indians lost much of their efficiency when removed from their native hills, he was reluctantly compelled to abandon his scheme of conquest. No sooner, however, had he quited San Salvador, on his return to Guatemala, than the authorities which he had installed, were overthrown by a concurrent movement of the people; and the only result of his invasion, was to inspire them with the deadliest hatred, both of him and his party, which has increased, rather than diminished, with the lapse of time.

CHAPTER VII.

CARRERA—RETURN OF MORAZAN—HIS DEATH—FURTHER DISTRACTION OF THE STATES—ATTEMPTS AT CONFEDERATION—(1841—1851).

THE year 1841 witnessed all semblance of nationality destroyed, and the Republic split into five distinct sovereignties, suspicious of each other, the prey of internal factions, and racked by the struggles of unscrupulous partizan leaders.

In Guatemala the members of the Servile Assembly found themselves the simple registers of the will of Carrera, who centered in himself the entire powers of the government. He early discovered the secret of the Servile friendship, and that the leaders of that faction aimed to make his shoulders the stepping-stone of their own elevation. He was no longer the ignorant pig-driver of Mita, the tool of a cunning priesthood, but a successful chieftain, greedy of power, and unscrupulous in his purpose of augmenting and securing it. He favored the views of the Serviles, therefore, only so far as they coincided with his own; he conformed to the law so far as the law could be made to conform to his purposes; but when it stood in the way of these, he hesitated not to evade or wholly disregard it. "You have the physical force of the country, I grant you," said an indignant member of the Assembly, addressing Carrera, in open session, "but the moral force of the country is with us, Señor General!" Carrera made no answer, but soon left the chamber. In fifteen minutes the bayonets of five hundred Indians gleamed

around the hall; the doors were opened wide, and Carrera entering, planted himself in front of the daring member, and pointing to the sable ranks of soldiery, exclaimed, "Here are my Indians! Where is your moral force?"

The priests were eager to procure, not only a restoration of the confiscated property of the church, but also of the tithes and other sources of revenue which had been abolished by the Liberals. Carrera assented to some of these demands, but prohibited the Assembly from passing any laws making the support of the priests obligatory upon the people. "If any one wishes to employ a priest, let him pay for it," was his brief reply to a decree of the Assembly, over which he blotted his pen, when it was presented for his approval.

Costa Rica remained under the dictatorship of Carillo; but, having received a new impulse from the successful introduction of the cultivation of coffee, was quiet and prosperous. It was enabled to pay off its quota of the national debt, and its surplus revenues were devoted to public improvements.

Nicaragua, San Salvador, and Honduras, although having distinct governments, yet cherished the idea of a Republic, and were engaged in constant, but ineffectual attempts to devise a satisfactory basis of union. Finally, however, it was arranged to refer the matter to a Congress of all the States, which was called to meet at Chinandega, in Nicaragua, on the 17th of March, 1842. The proposition met the undivided hostility of Carrera and the Serviles in Guatemala, and of Carillo, in Costa Rica; who not only refused concurrence, but threatened violent opposition to any attempt at national organization. The deputies of the States above named, nevertheless met, and proceeded to decide upon the terms of the union. It was agreed that, the National Government should consist "of a Supreme Delegate, chosen by a majority of the States; a body of Councilors elected in like manner; a Supreme Court of Final Appeals; and that each

State should have its own government and laws, and the control of its own revenues." The jealousy of a strong central power, which had been an active element in the dissolution of the Federation, was strikingly manifested in this *projet* of union. The fact that a government, with such limited powers, and without revenues, could only have a nominal existence, was so obvious, even to the strongest of the Anti-Centralists, that no serious attempt was made to carry the plan into operation.

Although the attempt failed, it yet afforded an evidence that the national spirit was not entirely suffocated; and the immediate friends of Morazan, indulging the belief that the personal hostility to him had, in a great measure, subsided, felt confident that his return would result in a permanent revival of the Federation.

They accordingly pressed him to present himself in the country, assuring him of an enthusiastic reception. Acting under these assurances, in March, 1842, he and his officers embarked at Valparaiso, on board of two vessels, one of which was named *Coquimbo;* and in the month following touched at the Port of La Union, in San Salvador. But finding that the plans of the Liberal Centralists were not yet ripe, he withdrew to the Port of Calderas, in Costa Rica. Here he soon rallied around himself the available force of the country, and marching to the capital, deposed Carillo, and elevated once more the prostrate flag of the Republic. The Legislative Chambers met, elected Morazan governor, and repealed the act separating the State from the Confederation.

This favorable result, in a state hitherto practically most hostile to the Republic, naturally raised the highest hopes in the breasts of Morazan and his officers and friends; who, from the vessel which had brought them, were called Coquimbos. They believed that the people of the various States, wearied of the political disorganization of the country, would declare for the restoration of the Republic, as soon as

the first earnest attempt towards its organization should be made. Morazan, therefore, raised troops, and made arrangements to advance beyond Costa Rica, into Nicaragua. A levy of 2000 men and $50,000 was decreed by the Assembly. But the people of Costa Rica were averse to war; a considerable part of the males fled to the woods to avoid the levy, and it was found necessary to resort to forcible means to carry out the decrees of the Assembly. This served still further to excite dissatisfaction, and facilitated the designs of emissaries sent by the affrighted Serviles and the English agents in Guatemala to undermine Morazan's popularity, and effect his overthrow before he should consolidate his power. At this moment a circumstance transpired which enabled them to strike a decisive blow. One of Morazan's officers, named Molina, a member of an influential Liberal family, forcibly abducted a young lady of rank from her father's house, for which he was arrested by his superior officer, Gen. Rivas. He chose to regard this as an insult, and retaliated by exciting the troops to insurrection, and by putting his commander to death. He was arrested at the Port of Calderas, and sentenced to be shot. The affair caused much excitement; a strong party was formed in favor of the delinquent, and it was feared that an attempt might be made to prevent the execution of the sentence. To guard against this, Morazan sent his confidential General, Sachet, and nearly all the troops upon whom he could rely, to Calderas, retaining around himself only a small guard. His enemies, finding him alone, and almost unprotected, seized upon the favorable moment to declare against him. The fickle populace, following the lead thus given, and in number some 5,000 men, attacked Morazan in San José, the capital. With a little handful of only three or four hundred followers, Morazan defended himself for two days and nights, and then cutting his way through his assailants fled to the city of Cartago, where, failing to receive assistance, he, with his two

sons and principal adherents, was taken prisoner, brought back to San José on the 18th of September, 1842, and immediately shot. Thus died the ablest, and in many respects the best, man which Central America ever produced. To Costa Rica belongs the odium of an act revolting to humanity, which, while it has forever arrayed the Liberal party against her, has secured for her the unenviable fellowship of the Servile faction in Guatemala, with which State she has ever since been identified in policy.

When the news of Morazan's capture reached his supporters on the coast, it was hardly credited; yet Gen. Cabañas, at the head of a small but chosen body of men, immediately started to relieve him. He had not proceeded far, when he was met by a Spaniard, named Espinach, who professed great friendship for Morazan, and who assured Cabañas that the General was not only in no personal danger, but was already on his way to the coast. Deceived by this information, the force returned to Calderas, where shortly after arrived the news of the atrocity at San José. Morazan's friends were struck aghast; his private secretary, Miguel Saravia, a man of extensive accomplishments, committed suicide; but death failed to sever the ties which had bound his followers to the cause of the Liberal chieftain. Their fortunes were now desperate; but they were true to the principles which they had espoused. They embarked on board some vessels in the harbor; and after blockading the port for some weeks, set sail for San Salvador. Here they were received and befriended by Malespin, then practically controlling the affairs of the State. This man had first attained notoriety as a highway robber, and had headed an insurrection against Morazan during his ascendancy in San Salvador, but had been defeated and driven into exile. He had subsequently returned with Carrera, and by him raised to the command of the forces, under the supposition that he would prove an uncompromising enemy of the Liberal party. But he soon found that the

Liberals, although divided on many questions, still predominated in the State, and shaped his course accordingly, with the ultimate view of strengthening his own power. He now saw an opportunity of conciliating the friends of Morazan, and securing them to his interest; and therefore, not only welcomed the Coquimbos, but shared amongst them many of the offices of the Government. This politic step, and the other means which he had adopted to conciliate his enemies, placed him at the head of the Government; and with his dashing manners, and decisive character, it at one time appeared as if his sway might spread over the adjacent States. Carrera and the Serviles were alarmed at this turn of affairs, but hesitated in coming to blows with their former associate. They however connived at an expedition, organized in Guatemala, for the invasion of San Salvador, by Gen. Arce, the first President and the betrayer of the Republic; who was now reduced, as if in punishment for his crimes, to the condition of a common adventurer. The expedition proved a total failure; and the act was at once disavowed by Carrera and the Serviles of Guatemala, who actually arrested and imprisoned their miserable tool, in order to give a color of sincerity to their protestations. But Malespin was not to be deceived; he raised a force, and retaliated, by invading Guatemala. The advance was made with such vigor and success, that it is likely the State would have been subdued, had not Malespin been recalled by an insurrection amongst his own troops, whom he had left behind. They had never been attached to their leader; and, Liberals at heart, declared for Gen. Cabañas, one of the best of Morazan's officers, a man of unimpeachable character, moderate principles, and humane disposition, and a proverb of bravery. And although Cabañas, true to his own reputation, refused to accept the command to the injury of his benefactor, Malespin, indignant at the preference shown to another, not only withdrew from Guatemala, but disbanded the forces supposed to be

least favorable to himself; and by his conduct laid the foundation of a quarrel, which terminated in his own destruction. Carrera in turn invaded San Salvador; but, fearful of being served in like manner with Malespin, he fell back without accomplishing anything worthy of remark.

After the death of Morazan, the States became not only divided in themselves, but amongst themselves. They were racked, not so much by partizan, as individual struggles for supremacy, and thus reduced to a lower and more repugnant form of anarchy. In Guatemala, as we have seen, Carrera had raised himself to supreme power; in San Salvador, Malespin was the irresponsible head of affairs; a man by the name of Ferrara held a similar position, under the denomination of President in Honduras; another, named Fonseca, styled himself Grand Marshal in Nicaragua; and still another, Alfaro, with the title of Provisional Chief, ruled in Costa Rica.

While the country was distracted by these struggles, and powerless to resist any act of encroachment, however flagrant; when the last prop of Nationality had fallen; the English agents at Belize thought the opportunity favorable for the execution of their long cherished designs on the Mosquito shore.

Accordingly in 1841, Col. Macdonald, the superintendant, left that establishment in a British vessel of war, and coasted along the coveted territory,—dispensing presents to the Indians, and pulling down the Central American flag wherever it was found flying. He visited San Juan, seized the Nicaraguan commander of the port, Col. Quijano, carried him on board his vessel, committed various personal indignities upon him, and then, after procuring his signature to certain documents, put him on shore on a distant coast. He also visited Roatan, and notwithstanding the disavowal of 1830, again seized it, pulled down the flag of Honduras, and having, in the significant language of British diplomacy in Central

America, "properly instructed," the inhabitants, returned to Belize. This act was never disavowed; on the contrary, when the government of Honduras pressed the restitution of the island upon the English Cabinet, the matter was cut short by a letter from Mr. Chatfield, saying that the act of Macdonald was performed under the orders of the British Government. The felony thus initiated, was consummated on the 10th of August last, 1851, when Roatan, Bonaca, Utila, and the other islands on the northern coast of Honduras, were formerly declared annexed to the superintendancy of Belize, under the denomination of the "Bay Islands."

The results of British aggressions have been summed up, by a British author, in the following terms: "To sum up our acquisitions in Central America, we have, at the present time, exclusive of such smaller items as Roatan and Tigre Islands, a total of 66,600 square miles, or 38,784,000 acres,[1] over which we exercise full control, *being nearly a third of Central America, and equal to two thirds of the area of Great Britain.*"

The details of the contests within and between the several States, have no general interest. Those contests were seldom for the vindication of principles; they originated chiefly in the misdirected ambitions, the bad passions, and the jealousy of the men who had the general direction of affairs, and who were rarely raised to power on the score of merit. After a protracted controversy with Honduras and San Salvador, Nicaragua, having sided with the "Coquimbos," was invaded by the united forces of these States, under the com-

[1] Crow's Central America, p. 220. Mr. Crow is mistaken in respect to Tigre Island. It was evacuated by the English within two months after its seizure. For a complete history of what is called the "Musquito Question," and of English interference in the domestic affairs of the Central American States, see "American Whig Review" for February, March, and November, 1850, and March, 1851.

mand of Malespin, in 1844. Leon was the first town which offered any effectual resistance, and in the siege which followed, it suffered all the terrors of Central American warfare. It was defended, by an inferior force, with a desperation unsurpassed in history, but was finally carried, after a protracted siege, over the corpses of its garrison. After this event, Nicaragua remained in quiet, with the exception of a local insurrection, headed by a man named Chelon, which was promptly suppressed, until the seizure of San Juan by the English, in January, 1848, and the insurrection of Samoza, in 1849. Within the present year, 1851, further disturbances have taken place, of the precise nature of which we are yet uninformed. What will be the final result, the future alone can determine.

As before stated, an attempt was made, in 1842, to reconstruct the confederation, which failed. Another attempt was made in 1847. A convention was called of all the States, to meet at Nacaome, in Honduras. But representatives appeared only from Nicaragua, Honduras, and San Salvador. These, nevertheless, proceeded to agree upon certain bases, which were afterwards known as the "Pact of Nacaome." This Pact was rather an act of close alliance than of confederation, and was neither acceptable to the Centralists nor Federalists. It does not appear to have met the concurrence of any of the States, and consequently never went into effect.

When Mr. Hise was commissioned as Chargé d'Affaires of the United States to Guatemala, in 1848, he was instructed, "whilst it is the intention of the United States to maintain its established policy of non-intervention in the concerns of foreign nations," that nevertheless, it would be his duty, by his "counsel and advice, should suitable occasion offer, to promote the reunion of the States which formed the Confederation of Central America." These instructions were made part of those of his successor, who, within one month after

his arrival in Nicaragua,—on the 1st of August, 1849,—took occasion to apprise the respective governments of the desires of the United States in this respect. The result was the appointment of commissioners on the parts respectively of Honduras, San Salvador and Nicaragua, who met in Leon in the month of November following, and agreed upon a union under the title of the "National Representation of Central America." The provisions of the Pact were few and simple, and by its terms both Costa Rica and Guatemala were invited to enter into the new union.

This Pact was *unanimously* ratified by the three States above named, and went into effect on the 9th of January, 1851, when the National Representatives met in the city of Chinandega, in Nicaragua![1] Don Jose Barrundia, an eminent Liberalist of San Salvader, was elected President.

From the House of the Government, the President and Representatives, accompanied by the officers of State, and the troops of the line of Nicaragua, proceeded to the Cathedral, and joined in the *Te Deum* in commemoration of this auspicious event. Appropriate demonstrations of joy were made in the various States. In recording it, the official Gazette of Nicaragua, exclaims as follows:—"After ten years of tempest and devastation, the rainbow of hope again spans the horizon of Central America—welcome, token of peace and prosperity. God grant that, with the experiences of the past to guide us, our future career may be marked by harmony and by wisdom, and conform to the high example which is afforded to us, by the Great Republic of North America."

[1] The American Government seems to have been utterly ignorant of this fact, as late as June of this year, when it commissioned a Charge d'Affaires to Nicaragua, *a State of the new Confederation!* Of course the government of Nicaragua could not receive this officer, who, at latest accounts, was living in Leon, in the capacity of a private citizen.

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